IOWA LEGENDS AND LYRICS

BY HOMER P. BRANCH



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HOMER POTTER BRANCH

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IOWA LEGENDS AND LYRICS

BY HOMER P. BRANCH
(UNCLE HO)

——— Read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

—Longfellow.

1916
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR
Sumner, Iowa

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THEY HAD NO POET

By Tigris, or the streams of Ind,
  Ere Colchis rose, or Babylon,
Forgotten empires dreamed and sinned,
  Setting tall towns against the dawn.

Which, when the proud sun smote upon,
  Flashed fire for fire, and pride for pride,
Their names were . . . . Ask oblivion! . . .
  They had no poet, and they died.

Queens, dusk of hair and tawny skinned,
  That loll where fellow leopards fawn,
Their hearts are dust before the wind,
  Their loves, that shook the world, are wan!

Passion is mighty, but anon
  Strong Death has Romance for his bride;
Their legends . . . . . Ask oblivion!
  They had no poet and they died.

Heroes, the braggart trumps that dinned
  Their futile triumphs, monarch pawn,
Wild tribesmen, kingdoms disciplined,
  Passed like a whirlwind, and were gone.

They built with bronze and gold and brawn,
  The inner vision still denied;
Their conquests . . . . Ask oblivion!
  They had no poet and they died.

Dumb oracles, and priests withdrawn,
  Was it but flesh they deified?
Their gods were . . . . Ask oblivion! . . .
  They had no poet and they died.

—Don Marquis in "Dreams and Dust."

IOWA LEGENDS AND LYRICS

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PART I

IOWA POEMS

HISTORICAL

DESCRIPTIVE AND

SENTIMENTAL

Iowa, with skies of blue,

We are lovers, me and you



THE FALLING SPRING

In Martin Fels' "Falling Spring Park," Auburn Twp., Fayette Co.

See "The Switzerland of Iowa." Page 9

THE SWITZERLAND OF IOWA

Fayette, Winneshiek, Allamakee and
Clayton Counties

They may talk about the grandeur of the scenes
across the seas,
The river Rhine, Kilarney lakes, the Alps and
Pyrenees,
The Congo and the Nile, and the Vale of old
Cashmere,
And all the grand and stately sights found else-
where, far and near;
But give me a week to wander mid the beauties
that abound
In "The Switzerland of Iowa," "the happy hunting
ground,"
Where the Volga, and the Turkey, and the Upper
Iowa,
Flash their ripples in the sunlight of a mid-
west perfect day.

For me, the beetling bluffs along the Yellow river
vale,
Or the templed hills and vistas and the woodlands
that prevail
Along the Mississippi river, or the pleasant roads
that wind
Down the coulees of a hundred creeks, of nature's
rarest kind,

In "The Switzerland of Iowa"! Ah here is pure
delight,
When the goldfinch is a singing and the sun is
shining bright,
And the corn is in the tassel, and the honeysuckle's
bloom
Is fragrant on the morning air with tonic-rare
perfume.

For me, the sylvan beauty which surrounds that
scenic gem,
The Falling Spring, near Auburn! Here is a
diadem
That is fit for a crown jewel in Queen Nature's
coronet;
The spot where, in the days of old, the Indian
sweethearts met
To plight their troth; 'twas also said that in this
fairy vale
Brave warriors came to sacrifice to the wargods
of the trail.
Hail to this witching spot of earth, which helped to
bring a name
To "The Switzerland of Iowa" and make it known
fame!

For me, a fishpole, line and hook, on Crane creek's
purling stream,
For me, an automobile ride, on a road that is a
dream,

'Neath hanging boughs, past harvest fields, across
low singing brooks,
O'er hills and dales, where flowers peep from many
bonny nooks,
In "The Switzerland of Iowa"! And let us sing the
praise
Of all this radiant region, that in radiant summer
days
Brings faith and hope charity and joy of heart and
soul,
And helps each earnest hustler to win the golden
goal.

For me, a vision from The Heights at old McGregor
town,
O'er the mighty Mississippi, and the steamboats
coming down;
For me, an exploration of the Ice Cave, there to
seek
Diversion odd, uncanny, in the heart of Winne-
shiek;
Or in the good old summer time to climb Mt.
Hosmer's side,
While the oriole is singing to his winsome little
bride,
In "The Switzerland of Iowa." Ah, here the soul
can dream
Beneath blue skies, in fragrant airs, mid scenes
that are supreme.

For me, a day or two among the river county hills,
To fish along the larger streams, to wander down
the rills,
Or penetrate quaint shady nooks at leisure, and enjoy
The various and charming moods of Nature wild
and coy,
Or to visit Dutton's cave, where the goblin and
the gnome
Could dwell in genial habitat and find an ample
home!
"The Switzerland of Iowa"! Ah name so well
bestowed,
A region rich for artist's brush, and poet's song or
ode.

For me, a glimpse, e'er and anon, of villages that
rest
Like gems of beauty rich and rare, upon the
maiden breast
Of "The Switzerland of Iowa"! they add to Nature's
charms
As do diamonds, gold and rubies to maiden neck
and arms;
For the villages, with pretty homes, schools,
churches, thriving marts,
Show an eloquence of beauty and of culture, where
the hearts
And minds and souls are filled with uplift and the
fine
Pride and aspiration that tend toward the divine.

CEDAR RIVER MEMORIES

Pardon, friend, my idle dreaming;
Pardon, if I fail to greet you,
Seeming distant, absent minded;
Pardon, for this strange abstraction
For today in recollection
Once again I tread the pathways,
Once again I climb the hillsides,
Once again I see the the waters,
Once again I feel the gracious
Shade and comfort, and the beauty
Of my old haunts on the Cedar—
Days of old, on the Red Cedar!
Queen and fairest of all rivers!

Once again I see the basswoods
Strong and graceful in their beauty,
And they sigh a mystic language,
And emit a pleasant fragrance,
As the summer winds caress them,
Lifting in their arms transparent,
Tossing boughs and hanging blossoms.
Once again I see the maples,
Sturdy oaks and swaying poplars,
Grand old elms and drooping willows
Of the Cedar river wildwood,
See them in fond recollection.

Grimly stalk the giant shadows
In the morning through this wildwood,
As the breezes from the river
Coax the great trees into swaying
To and fro in grand abeisance;
Proudly in their solemn silence
Move the shadows hither, thither,
As the stirring winds of evetide
Push and crowd among the treetops;
And at noon among the thick boughs,
Even when the days are hottest,
Cooling draughts are always moving
Like the soothing breath of fairies.

Clear and sparkling lays the river
With the sunlight bright upon it,
Only where a hill abruptly
Lifts its brow of scraggy limestone
And throws shadows o'er the water,
Or the basswoods, leaning outward,
Spread reflections on the river;
But the stream is just as pretty
In the shade as in the sunlight.

When the robe of night is fallen,
And the moon deploys her splendors
O'er the surface of the water,
Then the black bass and the sunfish.
Full of playfulness and frolic,
Leap into the mellow moonbeams,
And enjoy the night-time's freshness,

And absorb the fresh air needed
To support them on the morrow
When in deep pools lowly hiding
They seek refuge from the anglers
And the fierce glare of the sunshine.

Sing, O song, of the Red Cedar
And its fairy-peopled woodland;
Where the green ferns and wild flowers
Grow in all their native beauty;
Grow in wonderful profusion!
Feast, O soul, upon the beauty
Of the bluffs and rugged hillsides,
Fashioned in the splendid sculpture
Of the Artist of the Ages,
Into thousand times ten thousand
Landscapes that delight the vision;
Feast, until the joy of fullness
Is a rapture of elation!

Here the bonny lads and lasses
Love in picnics to assemble,
Love to scamper o'er the greensward;
Eat their luncheon 'neath the shadows
Of the great trees widely spreading,
And take boat rides on the river.

Here the young man and the maiden
Love to stroll in days of summer,
While the goldfinch and the robin,
Warbling thrush and gentle linnet,

Pipe and chatter in the treetops,
Sing and twitter in the bushes;
And the lovers, bird and human,
Feel the comfort and the beauty
Of this playground in the shadows,
Of this park by nature fashioned.

Here the town-worn man and woman
In July and torrid August
Love to spend a long vacation,
Tenting in the quasi-forest,
By some spring, or rill, or bluffside.

Each and all can play or ramble,
Rest upon the gracious greensward,
Swing at ease in drowsy hammocks,
Take a plunge in the cool river,
Wade or fish or go a-boating,
And enjoy sweet nature's pastimes
In this pleasant nook of nature.

Go, O friend, when winds of summer
Dally with the playful leaflets,
Go, when sun and cloud commingle
In a partnership of beauty,
To the banks of the Red Cedar,
Go and see another Eden,
See another Vale of Cashmere—
Yes, and fairer far than either!
You will then forgive my dreaming,
And will be yourself a dreamer,

When the freshets of the springtime
Swell the volume of the river
Till the willows on the shoresides
Seem to grow out in the water,
And the sun behind the clouds is,
And the world is chill and lonesome,
Then I gaze upon the current,
On the current wide and sullen,
And my heart is filled with yearning,
Indefinable, unsounded—
With a longing that o'erwhelms me,



View of High Water on the Cedar River near Waterloo
Courtesy Matt Parrott's & Sons Co.

Till there comes a sweet reaction,
And the light of inner visions
Throws a luster o'er the landscape,
Throws a glory o'er the water,
Then I see the strength and beauty
Of the swollen, splendid river,
And my soul seems borne in triumph
On the flood toward great achievements.

Full of charming, happy visions,
Absent minded in the presence
Of the friends who miss your greeting.

SONG OF CORBLY'S GROVE

A kindly faced old gentleman I met upon the train,
Spoke feelingly, with moisture in his eye,
"You've lived in Westgate, Iowa? My boy, I can't refrain
From wishing you a mansion in the sky,
For you surely know the pleasures of a stroll in Corbly's Grove,
And of picnics with the youngsters there, and all the happy drove;
O where e'er I chance to rove,
I remember Corbly's Grove,
It was there I met my sweetheart years ago;
She was pretty as could be,
And proved always true to me,
Her voice was like an angel's, sweet and low."

He told of jolly gatherings 'neath the spreading oaks that shade
The banks of gentle Stowe creek's winding stream,
Of picnics that the young folks had upon the fairy glade,
Of lover's talk and lover's happy dream,

And while he spoke he shook my hand in warm and friendly way,
A smile upon his fine old face, and once again did say,
"O where e'er I chance to rove,
I remember Corbly's Grove,
It was there I met my sweetheart years ago;
She was pretty as could be,
And proved always true to me,
Her voice was like an angel's, sweet and low."

He asked of friends of other days, of some now dead and gone,
And some still living in the neighborhood;
While nearer to life's sunset he looked back upon the dawn,
And mid youthtide's recollections dear he stood;
A rose was on his aged cheek, from warmth within his breast,
As once again he said to me, with earnest, graceful zest,
"O where e'er I chance to rove,
I remember Corbly's Grove,
It was there I met my sweetheart years ago;
She was pretty as could be,
And proved always true to me,
Her voice was like an angel's, sweet and low."

He told of swings and games and romps and luncheons in the wood,
With boys and girls now roaming with the blest;
Of quiet strolls with her he loved, with her so fair

and good,
While they talked and planned at Cupid's dear behest.
"And so you've lived down there, my boy? You love the dear old place?"
This he asked, so wistfully! then said, with gentle grace,
"O where e'er I chance to rove,
I remember Corbly's grove,
It was there I met my sweetheart years ago;
She was pretty as could be,
And proved always true to me,
Her voice was like an angel's, sweet and low."

And when we reached the station where we had to say good bye,
I noticed that he tapped the window pane,
And I looked out where he pointed as he gave the low, glad cry,
"See? my sweetheart's here to meet me at the train!"
And when he'd kissed his aged wife, still charming fair to see,
He proudly smiled, and, turning, called in farewell back to me,
"O where e'er I chance to rove,
I remember Corbly's Grove,
It was there I met my sweetheart years ago;
She's as pretty as can be,
She's been always true to me,
Her voice is like an angel's, sweet and low."

OUR SOD HOUSE PIONEERS

Go! O Thought! back to the '60's,
When Iowa's western prairies
Were a garden of wild flowers,
A broad fairyland in springtime,
And a heaven in the summer,
And a paradise in Autumn,
When the daisy and the gentian
And the wild rose bloomed in beauty
On the million sod bound acres,
Mid the bluejoint and the gumweed,
And the bunchgrass green and pretty;
When the prairie hen and wild duck
Reared their broods nor feared the hunts-
man,
And the rivers teemed with game fish,
Beaver, muskrats, mink and otter;
When in spring and early winter
Birds of passage filled the heavens;
When in Autumn the dry grasses,
Ripe and sere, were set on fire
Through mischance or lawless purpose,
And the rampant prairie fires,
Like a thousand tortured demons
Struggling in the gloom of night-time,
Swept the plains with madding fury

From horizon to horizon;
When the fierce and raging blizzard,
In the weird and lonely winter,
Drove the snow so fast and furious
That the drift would make one dizzy,
And oft blinded the wayfarer,
Causing him to grow bewildered
And to wander weak and weary,
Numb with cold, distressed, disheartened,
Happy if he did not perish;
When the gray wolf, fierce and scrawny,
Roamed in freedom o'er the prairie,
Seeking plunder in the darkness,
Oft a menace and a peril,
And at night aroused the echoes
With his fiendish yips and howling.

And when thou hast sung the beauty
Of those prairies wild and lonely,
And the hardships and the dangers
Which in those days they presented,
Sing, O Song, of the homesteader,
Hardy toiler, brave and honest,
Who with pluck and sturdy manhood
On those prairies first located,
On his tree-claim or pre-emption,
In his humble sodden shanty.
O that house so warm and cozy,
O that shelter for the loved ones,
The dear wife and romping children!
Those sod walls! Ah! every layer

Of the sod as they were builded
Had the warmest benediction
Of the God who loves the courage
And the manhood and the spirit
That inspire the heart to grapple
With the destinies of fortune
In a new, unsettled country!

O sing not of mossgrown castles,
Beetling towers nor dark dungeons!
O sing not of ancient Egypt,
Nor the luxuries of Asia,
Nor the deeds of ancient Romans,
Nor of battles, nor of conquests;
Sing not of the gods nor heroes
Of the mystical past ages,
Nor of life in brilliant parlors,
Nor of grandeur, pomp nor riches;
Sing not, Song, of lords and princes,
Nor of monuments nor ruins,
But sing thou of the homesteader
And his sod house on the prairie.

Ah! that sod house, dark and gloomy,
A mere black spot on the landscape!
O what cheer there was within it!
O what golden light came flooding
Through the deepset little windows.
Warm and cozy in the winter,
Cool and gracious in the summer,
Better was it than a palace,
Better than a gilded mansion.

Sing, O Song, of the erection
Of the house that was the cradle
Of the enterprise and glory
Seen now in the fields and meadows,
Ample barns and roads and fences,
Busy towns and pretty houses,
Scattered out like dreams of beauty
O'er Iowa's western prairies!

And thus the house of sod was builded:
Strips of tough sod, from a furrow
Broken from the close-grown edges
Of a slough, were laid in layers
'Long the sides and ends to corners,
Earth side up, grass side turned under,
Until four good walls were finished;
Then supported by rough timbers
With a roof the house was covered,
And the roof was made in this wise:
First the "rafters," three long timbers,
Were thrown lengthway o'er the structure,
And were carefully adjusted;
Then green willows from the river
Were laid crossway o'er the timbers,
Covered o'er with flags and rushes,
Then of long slough grass a layer;
This was sheeting clean and ample
For the final sodden cover,
Mounded up to shed the water.

One rude door was all the entrance,
Light went in at two small windows,
One at either end inserted;
And while building this rude dwelling,
The homesteader and his dear ones
Camped like Gypsies in their wagon,
In their wayworn "prairie schooner,"
That had brought them from New England,
From the old home back in York State,
Or some point less far in eastward.

In this humble home their baggage
Was bestowed as well as could be;
On the wall a few old pictures
Treasured from fair days of childhood,
Saved from out the sale at auction
Just before they started westward;
On the shelf some books and trinkets
Dear to each one of the household—
And the clock, their old timekeeper,
With the Bible standing by it.
Chests and trunks held clothes and dishes,
A home-made stand was desk and table;
From the roof suspended curtains
Between the beds were the partitions.
O'er the door the trusty rifle,
And the fowling-piece beside it,
With the powder horn and shot pouch,
And the hunter's knife and game bag,



"BY LITTLE WAPSIE'S STREAM"

Scene Near Sumner. One of the Author's Favorite Haunts

Photo by Dean, Sumner

Made a picturesque appearance,
Viewed with pride and satisfaction
By the menfolk of the family.

Far from woodland or coal market,
Nature had provided fuel
In the coarse grass of the bottoms,
Which in bundles tightly twisted,
Burned and crackled 'neath the kettles,
And sent out a warmth as cheerful
As a more enduring fuel.

Thus the early western settler
On his claim a house erected;
Thus the pioneer invaded,
With a heart strong and intrepid,
Lands to settlement thrown open,
And was there to welcome others
With his house and little cornfield,
Patch of grain and herd of cattle.

In such humble habitations
Lived the pioneers like gophers,
Yet in those very homes were nutured
Virtues such as hardly prosper
Mid the luxuries and languor
Of a home life rich and splendid.

From those humble homes a culture,
Such as womanhood and manhood
Of the nobler sorts, there issued.

O the christain, sturdy manhood
O the womanhood there fashioned!
Pillars in our statehood structure,
And in social life, and commerce,
Enterprise and education,
Strong and mighty in their virtue,
Bounteously blessed with wisdom,
Noble, true, the souls of honor.

Bless each flitting recollection
Of the sturdy, brave homesteader,
And his sod house on the prarie!
Bless our pioneers, O Master!
Thou who lov'st the noble hearted,
Thou who noble hearts created!

IOWA SONG

Iowa, 'tis of thee,
Fair State of Industry,
Of thee I sing;
State where the tasseled corn,
Of wealth and beauty born,
Glows in the purple morn,
A field-grown king.

State where the school house thrives,
Enriching myriad lives
Every year,

I love thy common sense,
Splendid intelligence,
Learned magnificence—
Hold them most dear.

My proud, grand Iowa!
Or whether grave or gay
My passing mood,
I love thy prairies green,
Thy woods and hills that lean
O'er streams and lakes serene,
Thy plenitude!

Let instrument and voice
Lend utterances choice
To swell thy fame;
Let all thy children dear,
Mothers that we revere,
Thy fathers far and near,
Sing thy loved name.

Give Iowa a cheer,
A rousing faithful cheer,
Give three times three!
Cheer for her constant gain,
Broad fields of waving grain,
Her wealth of brawn and brain,
Her chivalry!

THE NEW ANNIE LAURIE

Turkey River's banks are bonnie
  Where early falls the dew,
There me and Annie Laurie
  Made up the promise true,
Made up the promise true,
  We our hearts to each did give,
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
  I would forever live.

Her form is like an angel's,
  Her smile is like the dawn,
Her face it is the fairest
  That e're the sun shone on,
That e'er the sun shone on,
  And so brightly beams her eye
That when she looks upon me
  I never want to die.

Like dew on the meadow lying
  Is the fall of her fairy feet,
Like winds in the maples sighing
  Her voice is low and sweet,
Her voice is low and sweet,
  And she's all the world to me,
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
  I'd live eternally.

ODE TO THE CEDAR RIVER

Legended stream! I stroll
'Neath the shade of the trees
On thy shore, and my soul,
Dreaming soul! floats in ease
On the sunbeams that dart
O'er thy vine-vested shore—
Yea, my soul and my heart
Love the light that floats o'er
Thy soft-flowing beauty—
Thy light-rippling beauty!

Lovely birds dip their wings
In thy silvery course.
And the lark, as it sings
With an exquisite force,
Spreads its pinions and flies
Far away down the vale,
Where thy gentle flood lies,
A pelucid, bright trail.
He sings of thy beauty—
Thy shimmering beauty!

I look on thy current
As it dances along—
Thy clear, sparkling current
As it laughs in a song

Of harmonious glee!
And bright eyes of lovers
In a vision I see
'Neath the bloom that hovers
O'er thy romantic dells—
O'er thy sirenized dells!

And I think of the braves
And the maidens of yore—
Of the proud, painted braves,
And the brown maids of yore—
How they happily sought
Thy serene waterside
Ann their love-phrases wrought
As they looked on thy tide
On their quaint, mirrored forms—
On their strong, graceful forms!

And in fancy I see
The canoes of braves,
For the bold hunters, free,
Traveled oft on thy waves;
The warhoop echoes still
In the air round about,
Aye, for savages kill
And take pride in the rout
And the frenzies of war—
The wild terrors of war!

But the wild man is gone,
And his primative ways,

Like the darkness at dawn,
  Have sunk back in the rays
Of a civilized day;
  On thy turffed banks now
Happy white children play,
  And the husbandman's plow
Cuts the loam in thy vales—
Fertile loam in thy vales!

Where fierce wolf and vulture,
  Pierced the gloom of the wood
Now stand homes of culture,
  Filled with all that is good
Of wisdom and beauty
  And of firm enterprise
And high sense of duty;
  And the prisioner,s cries
Come no more from the stake—
From the blazing war-stake!

No more does the wild beast,
  Crazed with hunger aud thirst,
Prowl abroad for a feast,
  Ever fearing the worst
From a stealthier foe
  Or the hunter's sharp spear;
No more does the mild roe
  On thy greensward appear
With twin fawns at her side—
Pretty fawns at her side!

From the herd the meek kine
  And the soft-hearted sheep
Wander down to the mine
  Of the water, and deep
In the cool shadows flung
  From o'erhanging bowers
Rest carelsssly among
  The rich growth of flowers
That carpet thy valleys—
That nod in our valleys!

The purple of Autumn
  Proudly hangs on thy hills
The deep gold of Autumn
  Tosses bright on thy hills—
And the leaves whisper low
  Of deft Fairy fingers
Painting with brightest glow,
  The leaflet that lingers,
So they all wish to stay—
Like us all wish to stay!

A rapturous feeling
  Fills the breadth of my soul—
Unspeakable feeling
  Enlarges my soul—
As I walk in the glow
  Of thy beauty, O stream!
O my thoughts, how they flow—
  How in grandeur I dream
As I stroll down thy banks—
Down thy radiant banks!



Attractive Scene on Spirit Lake

To be afloat in a gallant boat on Spirit Lake's proud wave,
To spread a sail before the gale and make the craft behave,
Or take a plunge like a muskalunge in the waters fresh and fine
With the bathing throng on the white beach long, brings joy to this soul of mine.

ODE TO SPIRIT LAKE

Minne-wauken! I gaze
  On thy lustre-flecked breast,
And its pale sheen conveys
  To my soul's gloomy rest
Vague impressions; the night,
  And the spectrelike calm
Of the moon's pallid light,
  Like mystical balm
Casts a spell o'er thy wave—
O'er thy legended wave!

Through the vapors I see
  Flitting forms as they dance
In fantastic revelry
  Over thy swells; they advance
In mysterious lines
  Between Earth's sombre plain
And High Heaven's confines
  In lights that swell and wane
With the gleam of their eyes—
Changing gleam of their eyes!

They're the spirits of those
  Who've sunk 'neath thy waves,
Those who in death repose

'Neath thy current which laves
And caresses their forms—
Spirits that linger, loath
To depart, and in swarms
Dance along on the growth
Of thy shores near their dead—
Near the bones of their dead!

Now in shade, now in light,
They alternately glide,
In a crazy, wild flight,
And ne'er deign to abide
For a moment in place:—
Zephyr-tossed and bestrewn
They engage in a race
By the light of the moon,
And in wildered flight vie—
In phantasmic flight vie!

They dance along on thy shore
Like light sylph-shadows blown
And in concert deplore,
With a low-whispered moan
My intrusion, while I
Stroll along on thy strand,
And my steps in reply
Soft-resound from the sand,
As I moodily dream—
Lonely, moodily dream!

BY LITTLE WAPSIE'S STREAM

They may talk about great mountains, capped with eternal snows,
About fair southern valleys, where the sweet magnolia grows,
Niagara Falls, and Mammoth Cave, or rapids, lakes and seas,
About cold Arctic splendors, or the California breeze,
But give me a day of leisure, and a chance to stroll and dream
In peerless, grand old Iowa, by Little Wapsie's Stream.

The world is full of beauty and I've often wished to stand
By Afric's golden river or on India's coral strand,
Or see old France or Italy, or climb the Matterhorn,
Or walk the streets of Bethlehem where the Son of Man was born,
But to travel is denied me—yet I can stroll and dream
'Neath the blue skies of Iowa, by Little Wapsie's Stream.

There's nothing quite so pretty as the beauty that one sees,

When the blossoms hang in glory on the wild
crabapple trees,
Or the goldenrod glows richly from the banks
along the road,
Or the cornfields are in tassel, or the meadows
being mowed,
Or when startled bob-whites fly up from the path-
way's sunny gleam,
In summer-sweetened Iowa, by Little Wapsie's
Stream.

They may talk about the moonlight on the ocean
wild and deep,
About the whispering, sighing winds that through
the pine woods creep,
But for me the campfire's comfort, where the
embers, glowing red,
Now and then send stray sparks upward through
the oak boughs overhead,
And darkness settles round about, and quiet reigns
supreme
Beneath the dappled, moonlit clouds by Little
Wapsie's Stream.

For me a tent or wigwam on a hot night in July,
Or a "sleep" out in the open, underneath the
summer sky,
With the hoot-owl scolding sleepily the saucy
whippoorwill,
And a loan wolf, far out, howling, now and then,
until

Silence comes, and wrapped in thought I fall asleep and dream
Of shadows, stars, and wildwood sounds by Little Wapsie's Stream.

For me a story telling group around the campfire's glow,
With tales of prowess, fairy lore, Indian fights, and so,
And recollections of the past, and frolics of the young,
With here and there a pun or joke just at the right time sprung,
Till time to "turn in," or to sleep in open air, and dream
The jolly stories o'er again, by Little Wapsie's Stream.

For me the chipmunk's caper and the twitter of the birds,
And the tinkle of the cowbells out among the pasture herds,
And the rustle of the maple leaves atremble overhead,
And the murmur of the ripples in the narrow river bed,
Sunlight dimpling through the elms like pictures in a dream,
And over all the clear blue sky, by Little Wapsie's Stream.

For me a picnic in the woods beneath the grateful shade,
With luncheon, good and ample, spread out upon the glade,
And, round about, a bunch of romping, shouting girls and boys,
And lovers passing to and fro, eyes speaking untold joys,
And elders talking cheerily on every sort of theme,
In glorious old Iowa, by Little Wapsie's Stream.

Many a romance has sprung from Little Wapsie's shade,
Many a stalwart swain has won the love of winsome maid,
Many a winsome maid has snared the heart of stalwart swain,
While strolling down the woodland paths where flowers and wildbirds reign.
These kindred souls, where'er they be, O how they fondly dream
Of happy days in Iowa, by Little Wapsie's Stream.

Did you ever take a plunge bath in the sand-rimmed swimming hole?
Did you ever wade the shallows, filled with glee your boyish soul?
Did you ever cast a hook and line for bullhead or for pike,

From bridge or bank or bar or stump? Ah, it was
something like!
Now wasn't it? Ah, something like! And don't you
sometimes dream
Of those golden days in Iowa, by Little Wapsie's
Stream?

Did you ever gather hickory nuts or hunt the
cotton-tail,
Dig for woodchucks, climb for squirrels, or scare
the timid quail,
Drown out gophers, or get lost, when but a
half grown lad?
Did you explore the underbush, and scamper free
and glad
Along the cowpaths through the woods, and look
and think and dream
Such dream as boyhood only can, by Little Wapsie's
Stream.

Then I envy you your memories, for I have only
seen
The sylvan beauty thereabout, the gold, the red
and green
The groves and pools, the sward, the banks, through
eyes of the adult,
With less than half the pleasure that to youth-tide
would result;
But ne'ertheless, my hearty, I can stroll down
there and dream
A poet's dream in Iowa, by Little Wapsie's stream.

IOWA BOOSTER JINGLES

JANUARY

Nothing like a winter's night,
When the stars are extra bright,
In Iowa;
If the sleighing it is fine,
Or the moon makes out to shine,
And you hold her hand in thine,
In Iowa.

FEBRUARY

Ah, good fairies freely mingle
With the sleighbells as they jingle
In Iowa;
And when the weather it is cold,
They cheer the heart and make us bold,
And brave and strong, and pure as gold,
In Iowa.

MARCH

The pulse it is the strongest,
And one's lease of life the longest,
In Iowa:
Our skies they are the clearest,
Our womenfolk the dearest,
And good fortune always nearest,
In Iowa.



What a gush of euphony voluminously peels
O'er the broad and ripened fields as the fairy reaper wields
Its power o'er the yields
Of the harvest's princely boon!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the future! How it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the loud and gladsome ringing
Of the sickle,
Of the sickle, sickle, sickle,
To the rhyming and the chiming of the sickle!

—The Sickle. Page 52.

APRIL

Good bye, Winter! Bye, old boy!
We turn to Springtime's beaming joy,
In Iowa;
Fair Spring, with garments new and fine,
With winning smile, and grace divine,
And budding promise, we are thine;
In Iowa.

MAY

How cheery are the ides of spring,
When the skylarks are awing
In Iowa;
When the johnny-jump-ups smile
Up at you as you climb the stile
To go a fishing for a while,
In Iowa.

JUNE

Come to my arms, O queenly June!
You are mankind's fairest boon
In Iowa,
My heart of hearts is blithe and gay
When you smile, dear June, and say!
Would to gracious you could stay
In Iowa.

JULY

O joy! the harvest time has come,
And reapers they are going some,
In Iowa;

Our grain will soon be in the shock,
A bumper crop, now I should talk!
The farmer is "cock of the walk"
In Iowa.

AUGUST

Would you like to gaze on Paradise?
Then look around! Just use your eyes,
In Iowa;
The fields abound with stacks of gold,
The hillsides gleam with wealth untold,
Gardens of Eden here unfold,
In Iowa.

SEPTEMBER

Cutting corn is all the go,
September is now here, you know,
In Iowa;
The silos, they are being filled,
The county fairs are being billed,
And most of us are happy-willed,
In Iowa.

OCTOBER

October, so they truly say,
Is pleasant as the month of May,
In Iowa;
Weather's warm, the skys are bright,
The trees, they are a pretty sight,
In gold and green and purple dight,
In Iowa.

NOVEMBER

Indian Summer days are grand,
With sunny days and zephyrs bland,
In Iowa;
When frosty mornings bright and clear,
Noon hours full of warmth and cheer,
And golden sunsets oft appear,
In Iowa.

DECEMBER

Seek ye the "star of empire," dear?
Seek no farther—it is here,
In Iowa;
Our educators top the stack,
Our politicians lead the pack,
We forge ahead, we have the knack,
In Iowa.

THE SICKLES

Fashioned after "The Bells," one of Edgar A. Poe's most fanciful poems

Hear the singing of the sickle—
Teeth of steel,
Cutting down the golden grain in a happy, wild refrain,
That applauds the farmer's gain!
How it tinkles, tinkles, tinkles,
In the morning hours bright;
How it twinkles, twinkles, twinkles,
All the day until the night,
While the reel
Passing o'er the nodding grain with an airy light refrain,
Seems to thrill
With the shrill
Chirrup of the flying sickle!
Oh, the music of the sickle, sickle, sickle, sickle, sickle,
How it cackles with delight
While the sunshine's glittering sheen
Dances
With a thousand winsome glances
On this jaunty steel machine—
With many a coy reminder
On the sturdy, bright new binder,
Keeping time, time, time,

In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the rattle and the prattle of the sickle,
To the utter joyful flutter of the sickle,
Of the sickle, sickle, sickle,
To the music of the merry, cheery sickle.

Hear the sickle in its glee—
Hear it ring!
What a world of richest wealth, what a world of food and health,
Does it bring!
As the beaded sweat it trickles
Down the farmer's breast it tickles
Him, for don't he hear the nickels
Klinking, klinking, klinking,
And all in tune?
What a liquid ditty floats
Over barley, wheat and oats,
To the prairie hen that listens while she gloats
On the stubble she will soon
Forage for her meals!
What a gush of euphony voluminously peels
O'er the broad and ripened fields as the fairy reaper wields
Its power o'er the yields
Of the harvest's princely boon!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the future! How it tells
Of the rapture that impells
To the loud and gladsome ringing

Of the sickle,
Of the sickle, sickle, sickle,
To the rhyming and the chiming of the sickle!

Hear the chorus of the sickles—
Over hills and in the dells,
What a tale of joy and thrift their turbulency tells!
Oh, the drawing of the twine with a motion half divine
Through the attachment neat and fine
That binds bundles with such grace,
And every one in place,
Each movement is a poem in itself!
Not a fairy, nymph or elf,
Of river, land or ocean, ever moved with lighter motion,
And this pretty binding notion,
How it dances
As the good machine advances—
Through timothy and flax and rye,
Humming, singing merrily,
While the harvest hands rejoice, and with whistled note and voice,
Join the sickle's jocund cheer,
Sweet and clear,
For the grain is cleanly cut and the bundles nicely bound!
Ah, happily they listen to the sound.

Hear the laughter of the sickles—
Merry chimes!

Not a sob, nor sigh, nor groan, not a muffled monotone,
Comes from gnome or fiend or ghoul
With a grief for heart or soul,
For the Spirit of the Times
Rolls a paean from the sickles;
He dances and he sings, he chirrups and he rings,
And his merry bosom swells
With the paean of the sickles,
And he halloos and he yells,
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme
To the paean of the sickles,
And lustily proclaims that he who sows and reaps
Is the noblest work of God,
And he gambols and he leaps
O'er stubble, over sod,
To the flashing and the clashing of the sickles,
And in a glad acclaim,
And in language e'er the same,
He announces loud and clear
That the harvest time is here;
Aye, the Spirit of the Times
Swells with merry animation,
Throughout all the happy nation
And he rhymes and he chimes
With the paean of sickles,
As in a hundred phases
He gives voice unto the praises
Of the farmer's work and skill,
Of the husbandman who worketh with a will.

Oh, the sickles, sickles, sickles,
How they clang and clash and ring,
What a melody they fling
On the bosom of the palpitating air,
As the reaper old or new,
As the reaper strong and true,
Chatters round the harvest field so fair!
Ah, the rich and radiant harvest—
The full and glorious harvest
That the sickles cut with glee!
Merrily the farmer's soul is swelling
While the sickles keen are telling
Of the bounty God has given from the bosom of high heaven
To the tiller of the soil
In the cheery, gay turmoil
Of the sickle,
Of the sickle, sickle, sickle,
In the utter joyful flutter of the sickle.

PART II

POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

Soulfelt thought
and heartborn dream
Here are launched
on life's fair stream

A PICTURE FROM MEMORY

I sat 'neath the shade of a hanging vine,
On the bank of a purling stream,
In a pleasant vale where the warm sunshine
Gave a smile with every beam;
And I gazed where the landscape, fair and bright,
Kissed the sky in the purple haze,
And let my soul out on a musing flight
Through scenes of other days.

In charm-led vision it ranged down through
Wonderful, glorious years,
Through days that in beauty smiled 'neath the blue
Of the canopy of the spheres;
Thru days that were troubled with strife and toil,
Through hours of danger and storm,
Through Vanity's glitter and much turmoil,
Till a picture gathered in form.

A thousand incidents passed in review
Within sight of my raptured eyes,
Till the various picture in fancy grew
From the Earth to the splendid skies,
And swept o'er the firmament vast and stark,
In myriad gleams of light,
That darted and leaped through shadows dark
Like shooting-stars through the night.

Memories bitter and memories sweet
Were portrayed with magic hand,
From midlife's strength to the wavering feet
That bore me in Babyland;
From the present time's impressive hour
Back into mists of the past,
Where memory faints in the dreamy bower
That faded away too fast.

And I felt the swaying of cradle-time,
Heard low, sweet words of song,
Saw a face like an angel's, sweet, sublime,
Near me the whole day long;
And I seemed to live in a dreamy calm,
In a realm of radiance,
And every touch was as soothing balm
'Neath that fond, ecstatic glance.

But the charm-filled picture faded away,
Except the transcendent face,
Which floats o'er me still like a joyous ray
Of love from the star of grace;
And the fondest visions of memory
Linger around its smile—
The glories of beautiful memory
Endure in its smile.

THE BYE AND BYE

The pretty vision of a happy land
  Swept past me in my daylight dreams;
    Swept past, delayed, and then returned—
  A land of sunny founts and streams,
    Of vernal hills and dells, displayed
Beneath a high-arched rainbow's brilliant band.

The rippling music of a thousand rills,
  The carrol-notes of many birds,
    The purr of tiny waterfalls,
  And cheery trills of pleasant words
    From voices soft within the walls
Of crystal mansions, echoed o'er the hills.

Small lakes with turfed shores and waters clear,
  And rippling wavelets tipped with light,
    (Where splendid swans in stately pride
  E'er swam, a vision of delight),
    Lay beautiful on every side,
Gay-dimpling here and there and far and near.

And gardens clothed in Eden's fairest bloom
  Peeped out in genial radiance
    Through vistas glistening, and from dells
  And deep retreats where merry dance

And song resounded oft to swells
Of music borne on zephyrs of perfume.

And all was happiness—nought to alloy!
No shadows for a moment e'en
Abashed the rare aurora that
Diffused o'er all its cheerful sheen;
No thought of gloomy sorrow sat
For one small moment there to check the joy.

It was a vision of the bye and bye;
Bright faces by the score were there
Of friends beloved in the past,
And in those bowers they looked so fair
I knew the vision could not last,—
Like other dreams 'twould vanish from the eye.

Indeed it fled, as dreams will ever fly,
That glad and radiant vision;
The happy throngs and music soft,
The vales and flowers elysian,
And leafy vine-shades hung aloft,
Are gone, in all but Fancy's memory!

CHOIR OF THE DAYBREAK

I sat by the window at daybreak
As the wildbirds carroled the hour,
And watched the shadows of night time
Droop 'neath the morning's power,
And as the banners of sunrise
Flung their colors above the trees,
The burst of light charmed the bird notes
Into sweeter melodies.

The thrush, the linnet and robbin,
The oreole, cat bird aud jay,
And all the choir of the treetop,
Spiritedly sang and gay,
And with notes unknown to mortals,
With harmonies grandly fair
As the soul's unuttered music,
They piped on the morning air.

The daybreak's freshness and grandeur,
And the songs of the happy birds,
Commingled in tender beauty
That cannot be told in words,
And a gladness settled o'er me
That lifted me out of the cares
That yesterday bore upon me
In the burden of affairs.

And my heart communed with angels
  On the sacred memories massed
In the stalls of recollection
  Scattered all along the past,
And the future's brilliant finger
  In a beckoning gesture shined,
A strange, glad impulse awaking,
  That cannot be defined.

O the glory of the morning,
  And the wildbird's heaven-made song
O the good that is created
  To take the place of wrong!
But the fondest hours of lifetime,
  And the gladdest moments e'en,
Do they teach us always, sweetheart,
  The love of the Great Unseen?

A MOTHER'S HEART

A mother's is the warmest heart,
In life she acts the sweetest part,
  It is most truly said;
A mother's is the fondest tear
That falls upon the coffined bier
  From mourner o'er the dead.

POETRY'S THOUGHT

A cadence enchanting on the echoes is sweeping
In voluptuous, life thrilling strains, thro' the vale;
Its beauty, its wildness, its laughing, its weeping,
Pulsate in grand tremors fore'er on the gale.
A various story it tells in its sobbing,
Of hearts sick and weary, of hearts madly throbbing:
A beautiful story it tells in its laughing,
Of souls full of sweetness, of glory and gladness,
And charms of love-nectar that gay souls are quaffing—
Of sunbeams e'er chasing the shadows of sadness!
'Tis the hallowed music of Poetry's Thought,
Its gracious enchantments come ever unsought.

THE FANDANGO

There's a time to laugh and a time to weep,
There's a time to wake and a time to sleep,
And aye a time to dance!
There's a time to think of solemn things,
And a time for thought to fly on the wings
Of Pleasure's gay advance.

Then, heyoh! let us whirl and glide and swing,
To the thrill of the harp and the fiddle string,

Now while we have the chance,
For tomorrow morn may come with a cloud,
And Grief's wail be borne on the winds aloud,
O now's the time to dance!

CRABAPPLE BLOSSOMS

Dainty blossoms now are hanging
Like a thousand little fairies
On the crabtrees' thorny branches,
And the passing wind it carries
Sprays of perfume from their faces
On to every passer-by.

And the fragrant odors coming
From the tossing boughs so sweetly
Charm the soul as well as senses
With a spell that binds completely
O'er the heart a glow of graces,
That we'll not break without a sigh.

THE OLD TREASURES

How we cherish the old treasures,
How we dream of the old pleasures
Of the golden happy days long gone;
How we peer into the future—
The grand mirage of the future!—
For the treasures and pleasures coming on.

The Autumn leaves in motley weaves
Are floating down the stream,
And their colors gay in the golden day,
All smiles with glint and gleam,
Right now out-do the sky's deep blue,
Or the water's brown and green,
Or the sunlit flash of the ripples' dash,
Or the high bank's ocre scene.



AUTUMN LEAVES AND FALL WINDS

Scene Near Sumner, "By Little Wapsie's Stream"

The wind-gusts lift with frequent shift
The dry leaves on the shore,
And whirl and swing like birds awing
The leaves o'erhead—and more!—
They whip the clouds into snow-white shrouds,
And whistle through the trees,
And sigh and moan in a wonder-tone—
It is Fall on the Wapsie lees.

O Son of Mine!



O son of mine, ere you were born
I looked ahead to that glad morn
When with the rising of the sun
You'd be a man of twenty-one;
That day has come and gone, my boy,
But memory still retains its joy.
Ah, when your little baby face
Would greet me with its cherub-grace,
Your hands outstretched to welcome me
When I came home for lunch or tea,
My soul looked far across the span
When I'd be daddy of a man;
And when in troubled sleep I fought,
My dreams with many demons fraught,
Or were I drowning in my dream
In some dark tarn or surging stream,
The danger? ah, no matter what,
My boy, grown up, was on the spot
To rescue me from awful fate,
Or striking hand, or demon's hate.



Swift Time sped on and sports and plays
And work and study filled your days.
You were the center of our home
That time, ere you set our to roam.
Those are the days I think about,
E'er and anon, amid the rout
Of business cares, and oft I see—
Ah, see!—you as you used to be,
And see you, when your mother yearned
For the return her love had earned,
Give her your manly, fond caress,
Filling her eyes with happiness.

Yes, those dear days in memory
Today I fondly proudly see,
Yet I would not recross the span—
I'm proud today you are a man,
Full muscled, robust, mental ken
That puts you with the best in men.

BROWNIE BOY

Brownie Boy, out in the snow!
That's what makes the rascal grow!
Yes, for boyhood's greatest sports
Are playing snowball, building forts,
Charging thru snowbanks with glee,
Wading, plunging joyously,
Mittens soaked and feet sopwet—
Catching cold? O no, don't fret!
Young blood warm with healthful play
Wards off sickness any day.

Early childood is the time,
In this hardy, rugged clime,
To "toughen up" a likely lad,
Make him manly, like his dad;
Brother big, or hero great,
Whoe'er he wants to imitate;
Nothing does this like hard play
From morning until close of day;
Weather bad or weather good,
Hard play builds up hardihood.

When the snow comes floating down
Over woods and fields and town,
Great flakes floating light and fair,
Filling all the silent air,
Fondled by the gentle breeze,
Lodging on the roofs and trees,

Dropping from the dim, gray sky
Onto every passer by,
Mantling all the earth with white,
Making it a pretty sight,
Then the playful Brownie Boy
Looks abroad with bounding joy,
Dons his cap and in a trice
Is out in this new paradise,
For the Almighty Father knows
That all the flowers that He grows
In torrid land or summer time,
And all His charms of warmer clime,
In inspiration are below
The beauty of His falling snow;
And when the mighty winds arise
How the falling snow it flies,
Filling all the whitened land
With a tumult wild and grand.

What, my boy, if it grows cold,
Should that strike terror to the bold?
No, no! it is Old Winter sere,
It is our climate so severe,
That makes our northern lad and man
Leaders, ever in the van,
With zest for life and enterprise
And all the good that in them lies.

Brownie Boy, young friend of mine,
Let us look without a whine
Into the blizzard's biting teeth,

And believe it far beneath
Our grit and hardihood to scold
At Old Winter's nipping cold,
Or to wish to spend our days
In the enervating rays
Of tropic suns, or in a land
Ever by warm breezes fanned;
Lands where skating is not known,
Lands outside the sleighing zone,
Lands where lads can never know
The joy of playing in the snow,
Nor catching onto bobs, and such—
Those lands are not for us—not much!

Frosty mornings, when the sheen
Of rime upon the trees is seen,
Glistening on roof and wall,
On 'phone poles and flagstaffs tall,
Fence and highway, fields and town,
Clean and white as fleecy down—
Cold and snappy, though, O my!
See the frost-flakes as they fly!—
Then is when the Brownie Boy
Fullest is of pulsing joy.

Hi! Here comes a bunch of boys,
Putting up a jolly noise,
Ah! here also comes a dray,
Prancing team, big, fat and bay.
"All aboard, and come along!"
Shouts the drayman, good and strong.

"Hear the invitation—hey?
He's a good one, and his sleigh
Is big enough to hold the gang.
My! just hear those sleighbells clang!
Hullyjee! now aint this fun?
Horses they just want to run!
Why! he goes clear down the street!
Quit a steppin' on my feet!
Here's the depot! Whoa! He stopped
So suddenly I almost flopped!
Now jump off, he says, be quick!
Thank you, mister, you're a brick."

"Here comes another team and sled;
All jump on, now don't be dead!
Sakes! that old chump he is mean,
Crankiest I've ever seen,
Whippin' kids plum off his sleigh,
And yellin' cuss-words thataway!
Guess he never was a lad,
Or he wouldn't get so mad."

"Here comes Farmer Jones—and say!
Grab the back end of his sleigh;
Welcome, if you get a hold!
Ouch! my fingers they are cold.
Here's a corner! Hang on! Whee!
Kept a holt though—joy to me!
Mr. Jones he is O. K.
Never drives us from his sleigh."

"There's the school bell, let us go
Like Injins, single file, just so;
Get there, fellows, every soul—
Let the school house be our goal."

This is just a passing glimpse
Of these—do you call them imps?
Rattle-heads who cannot climb
To honors high, if given time?
No, sir, no! From out that crowd
Of frisky youngsters, wild and loud,
A president may come some day,
Or scientist, both sage and gray,
Merchant, prince, or stockman great,
Engineer or high prelate,
Orator or editor,
Captain of man-of-war,
Statesman, judge, philanthropist,
Or e'en a greater, better list
Of goodly men then you and I
Who loves the boys, might prophesy.

FAIRY GIRL

Fairy Girl, demure or gay,
Joy attend thee at thy play,
Whether it be jump-the-rope,
Mumble-peg or antelope,
London Bridge or pullaway,
Mother Goose or Queen of May,
Drop the 'kerchief, needle's eye,
Keeping house or I spy,
Blind man's buff or dressing dolls,
Or any other folderols
Of childish pastime, may it be
All of happiness to thee.

Who are these on winged feet
Flitting down the village street?—
Fairy Girls! who've planned to go
To the Picnic Woods, and so
Hither comes the carry-all—
Into it they quickly crawl,
Manners gay and dresses fine,
Faces that with pleasure shine,
Driver smiles and waves his hand
At this glimpse of Fairyland.
Away go "Baldy" and "Wild Bill,"
Trotting proudly, with the skill,

Grace of style and show of game
By which both are known to fame.
Happy horses, happy maids—
See them ere the vision fades
Out of sight far down the road—
Never was a nicer load.

Farmer Jones' ample rig
(It is almost twice as big
As any other) comes along
With a flourish and a song,
Horses prancing, gay, bon ton,
Wagon great, with hayrack on,
Loaded down with Fairy Girls,
Dancing eyes and sunny curls!
Whoa! they stop right on Main street,
Horses lift impatient feet!
Farmer Jones says, "Hurry thar,
Climb intew my private car!"
Keen-eyed, wiry, gaunt and tall,
He's an "uncle" to 'em all,
For though strict in act and creed,
He's kindly e'er in word and deed,
Young at heart, a cherry soul,
Full of stories quaint and droll.
Farmer Jones! Ah! bless his name!
May he ever grow in fame.
See his flag as it unfurls
O'er his load of Fairy Girls.
Laughter fills the air as they
Pass us by in proud array.

Well, well! What is all this fuss?
Waiting for the auto bus?
Yes! a happy, romping bunch,
Loaded down with picnic lunch!
More Fairy Girls! My sakes! Ah, me!
Isn't this a sight to see?
Ribbons bright and dresses new,
Made of pink and gray and blue,
Green and lilac, white and buff
And all sorts of pretty stuff.
All aboard! Away they go,
Screams and laughter, smiles and Oh!
What a time they'll have today
In the woodland blithe and gay!
But the town without them, though,
Will be dead as Sleepy Row,
Will be lacking color, grace,
Without one bright, girlish face;
Sure! the day will all go wrong
Without one sweet girlish song;
What would Oldtown be, I trow,
What would happen anyhow,
How could pleasure e'er abound
Without the girlies flitting 'round?

Fairy girl, if sweet sixteen,
Or more or less, thy years serene,
Whether household tasks are thine,
Or studies hard or music fine,
Or fancy work or painter's art,
Employ thy time and fill thy heart,

THE CLIFF

The warm sun shone on tree and stone,
The beetling bluff stood high,
The singing bird o'erhead was heard
And clear blue was the sky,
And under foot o'er rock and root
A cool and sparkling stream
Ran fair and swift--Jehovah's gift--
The groundwork of a dream.

A Scene of Rugged Beauty Near West Union
Courtesy of Mr. A. E. McIlree

BALLARD

Whether social pleasures call
Or disappointments on thee fall;
Whether chums, delights and plays
Fill with happiness thy days,
Or thy hours are dull with care,
Or plain and spiceless be thy fare,
Whether thou art poor or rich,
Or well to do, no matter which,
May sweet faith be always thine
In the love of God divine;
Whether thou art stout or spare,
Be thou e'er a jewel rare;
Whether short or tall or slight,
May thy heart be e'er as white
And thy soul as sweetly fair
As they nightly uttered prayer.

It may be, O Fairy Girl,
That in life's great, busy whirl,
In the days that are to be
(And may many come to thee)
Men and women yet unborn
May count it blessed to adorn
Poesy, historic page,
Sermon, lecture, essay sage,
Conversation, letters, thought,
With the deeds that thou hast wrought;
Or, if common be thy lot,
May it be a blessed spot
For all around thee where thou art,
Through the love that rules thy heart.

A DREAMLAND EXPERIENCE

After my day's work was ended,
All the broken moments mended,
I sat down before my blazing
Office fire, and in it gazing,
Lost myself in idle musing,
Pleasant thoughts of children using,
Giving to good necromancy
Full control of all my fancy.

As the darkness deepened 'round me,
Shadow-bogies could have found me,
Sitting, dozing in my arm chair,
Dreaming it was pleasant, warm there,
Dreaming that the summer grasses
Waved to greet the lads and lasses,
As they raced in joyous frolic
Through a woodlot gay, bucolic.

Ah, the beaming of their faces,
And their lithe and supple graces,
As they ran and jumped and gambol'd;
As they danced and romped and rambled,
Laughing, singing, crowing, shouting,
Showed that they enjoyed their outing!
How the beauties of the wildwood
Charm the happy hearts of childhood.

There at noon with many capers
They spread out some old newspapers
On the grass, then laid their luncheon,
And at once began their munchin'—
Happy e'er is childhood's dinner,
All tasts good to life's beginner,
And dyspepsia does not 'fright him,
Victuals do naught but delight him.

Meat and jam, preserves and pickles,
Charm the children, and it tickles
All the youngsters of all classes
To munch away at "bread an' 'lasses";
And at picnics—oh, the glory
Ne'er was told in song or story
Of the good taste of the cooking
Done by mammas all good looking.

But the sunshine shrank and faded,
And in little faces (shaded
By the dream clouds), looks showed,
tearful,
They were of coming showers fearful.
From the denseness of a dream cloud
Came a clap that didn't seem loud,
Just a muffled thunder-rumble,
But it made the children humble.

Then the rain came pouring, gushing,
Then the children all came rushing,
But to hail and snow the storm turned,

And the summer glad and warm spurned
The cold only just one minute,
For the snow soon wrapped within it.
All the little trouble faces,
Froze them stiff there in their places

And the biting storm it filled me
With a coldness that soon chilled me
And I felt a dreadful stinging
As of nettles to me clinging,
And I felt a weak'ning numbness,
And an overpowering dumbness,
So I fell and could not utter
One poor word, not e'en a mutter.

And I heard the awful moaning
Of the children dying, groaning,
While the pallor and the starkness
Of the snow sank into darkness;
Then a yell, like shout of Hindoo,
Just outside my office window,
Brought me back from Dreamland's features,
Back to Earth and earthly creatures.

And I found I had been dreaming,
While the erstwhile cheerful gleaming
Of my fire had sunk to ashes,
And old Jack Frost's chilly lashes
They had stung my toes and fingers
With a keeness that still lingers

In rheumatic pangs and twinges,
And they "creak upon their hinges."

But from this I will recover,
When the summer angels hover
Over poor rheumatic limpers,
Quieting their groans and whimpers!
And the children, they are jolly,
Looking for the sweets and holly,
Christmas joy and good Old Santa,
Soon to come to manse and shanty.

RECOLLECTIONS

Down the listless, peaceful shore,
Of the dreaming thoughts of yore,
Through the olden,
Aye, and golden,
Recollections of the past,
To-night my soul is roving—
Roving 'neath the mellow skies
Of those pleasant memories—
Beguiled in transport, moving
Thro' the vaulted, vague and vast
Region of Youth's early bower,
Basking in its sun and shower.
Bless the memory of those days
Bless their warm recurring rays!

THE BELL COW "CREAM"

Last night I dreamed of my boyhood—
A homely kind of a dream!
I was down in the old south pasture
Milking the bell-cow "Cream,"
While the twilight stole down softly,
And my thoughts they lived again
In the romance fields of youthtide—
God bless the dream! Amen!

Ah, the hopes that lit the future!
They came, a splendid stream,
Like the rich milk from the udders
Of good old faithful "Cream";—
Such visions of wealth and greatness!
And her whom I loved best
I fancied among the fairies
With face the loveliest.

And I pictured stately mansions,
And grandeur, all my own,
And my thoughts fled thru air-castles
As they many times have flown;
And I dreamt and built till the jingle
Of "Cream's" old sweet-toned bell
Told that I had finished milking,
But when, it did not tell.

I stroked her soft flank gently
As if to apologize,
And sat for a moment longer
Looking into the skies;
And she turned and licked my forehead
Just as she used to do,
In her honest dumb affection,
And uttered a gentle moo.

Close by were the brindle heifer,
Brown calf and yearling steer,
And over there in the corner
The Jersey bull, Ahmeer,
While "Topsy", "Rose" and "Mary",
Were huddled near the bars;
The dew was falling over all,
The moon swam with the stars.

I arose and looked around me,
And felt the cooling breeze,
And watched the shadows gather
Weirdly among the trees,
And let the spirits of fancy
Play on my throbbing heart
From a fantasy of wonder
The most enchanting part.

And then I watched for a moment
The quiet little herd,

And the muffled tone of Old Cream's bell
  Was all the sound I heard;
Barefooted I, clothed carelessly,
  A boy of moods and dreams,—
But the dream it passed and I awoke
  To the morning's sunlit beams.

And as I heard through the window
  The bells from the fields afar,
Softly and sweetly tinkling,
  Like notes from a guitar,
Again I thought of the pasture
  Where I used to sit and dream,
Milking "Topsy," "Rose" and "Mary,"
  And the good old bell-cow "Cream."

Today I review the failures
  That have fallen to my lot,
And bring to mind the triumphs,
  Ah, none have been forgot!
But through them all, the pasture
  And the tinkle of Old Cream's bell
Come like a dear old story,
  Too sweet for tongue to tell.



Cosy Corner of the Cass Farm Pasture, near Sumner

"By Little Wapsie's Stream."

Within the Cass Farm pasture green,
Full many charming sights are seen;
Beneath the oak trees' grateful shade
Rare Holstein beauties are arrayed
In quiet comfort, and they chew
Their ample cuds, and look at you
With thoughtful air and friendly eye
As if to say, "The passerby
Enjoys the beauty that he sees
Here underneath the shady trees,
And likes so well our Holstein style
That oft he lingers for awhile
And looks at us and hums, or sings,
Or whistles, or says pretty things
And mutters to himself the vow,
'Sometime I'll have a Holstein cow.' "

TROUBLED SLEEP

The Fates weep
As they keep
Vigils o'er our troubled sleep;
Yes, they weep,
And they creep
Softly round us while we sleep;
Moving slightly,
Treading lightly,
While insanely we dream
In the phantom-palled night—
Wildly, restlessly dream
In the fiend-haunted night!—
And their whispers,
Soft as vespers
That tremble on the air
Of eve with sweet declare,
Are oft broken—
Aye, are broken!—
By the wild moans
Of the sleeping,
And by the groans
And the weeping
Caused by troubles sweeping
Without number
Through the brain,
While in slumber
We complain
In agonized despair!

Dark spirits gloat
(As they float
Before the visions of the mind)
On our
Trembling fear;
And they rear
To the imagination's blind
Devoir
With fierce menaces that appall!
Oh, how we shudder in their thrall
As grim Nightmare hovers thus
Over us! How we cry
At the dread that covers us—
How we in anguish try
To throw off the horror—the chill—
The excessive fright—the wild thrill—
The mutations of fear and hate
That render the soul desperate!

Demons laugh
As they quaff
Evil from our troubled sleep;
Aye, they laugh,
And they chaff
At our frenzy while we sleep;
Fiercely glancing,
Madly dancing,
While we crazily dream
In the darkness and gloom—

In wildered orgasm dream
Through night time's dreary gloom!—
And their gestures,
Wild as vestures
Of darkened storm-clouds torn
In ragged parts forlorn
By the raging,
Unassuaging
Anger of the
Furious wind—
Hurling of the
Violent wind!—
Appall us till resigned
In quasi-death
We recline
Without a breath
Of design
Until roused by the morn.

But angels sing
As they wing
On hallowed flight through silent night
And gloom;
Yes they sing,
And they bring
Repose and quiet and delight,
Perfume
Of flowers and sweet balm of rest
To soothe the agitated breast—

And they move to and fro
  In the zephyrs overhead,
And they breathe soft and low
  All around our pillowed bed,
Till by submission to their will
Our throbbing hearts grow calm and still
And we are lulled to peaceful sleep—
To blissful slumber long and deep!

FRIENDSHIP'S ROSES

Garlands of bewitching flowers
Given us in blissful hours
    Are friendship's roses rare;
Chaplets of all pleasing hues,
    Sweet blossoms bright and fair,
Perfumed with the honeyed dews
    Of everlasting joy!
Fragrant they, in beauty dight,
Blooming e'er through day and night,
Bringing to us heart's delight,
    Free from all alloy.

FRANCES E. WILLARD

1894

Sing, O Muse! of Frances Willard,
She the queen of temp'rance workers,
She beloved of our people,
She whose great, found heart the angels
Lead in paths of grandest duty;
Sing, O Muse! of this good woman
Round whose deeds the gentle halo
Of a noble life is shining!
She has lived, still lives, sublimely,
In a way that pleases heaven.

Much there is in life to live for
Other than insipid pleasures,
If we only get the richness,
If we only see the beauty,
If we only reach the grandeur
Of the good for us created;
If we turn into the bright way
And avoid the gloomy darkness,
Fighting back the chasing shadows;
If we work for high achievements
And in good deeds are not idle.

Idlers never reach such grandeur
As is seen in sinking manhood
Lifted into noble uses
By one's own God-crowned endeavors;
Idlers never see the beauty

Of a soul of sin unburdened
By one's own deeds of true kindness;
Idlers never know the richness
Poured down by exultant heaven
Upon him or her who rescues
From a wanton's hellward struggle
Any fallen girl or women.
Ah, the grandeur, beauty, richness,
Of great works of reformation,
In both politics and morals,
In both statesmanship and home life,
In society and business
Are enjoyed by those who labor
For the welfare of the masses.
Some are selfish, many idle,
Some are reckless, many callous,
Else such wrecks and desolation
As bestrew life's many highways
Would not happen, could not happen,
In a world so fair as ours.
O the wickedness of Satan!
O his wreched liquor hell-holes,
Where the drink-lured man is poisoned
By the alcoholic reptile
Until morals, pride and reason
Fall within the demon's meshes,
And an appetite e'er gnawing
Mocks the drinker with its horrors,
Robbing him of health and manhood,
Until sodden, leering, sloven,
He appears among his fellows

Only a poor, broken drunkard.
O the sorrow of his mother,
Of his wife or hapless children;
O the keeness of their sorrow,
And their shame and degradation,
As the son, husband or father,
Is each day led farther downward
By his appetite for liquor.
O the crimes, the brawls and starving,
O the brutish scenes enacted
In the haunts of liquor drinkers;
O the apathy of people
Who could stop the drunken orgies,
Who could stop the actions cruel,
Who could stop the degradation
And build up the fallen manhood,
By their influence and ballot,
By enacting prohibition,
Standing ready to enforce it,
So the liquor selling robbers
And the makers of the poison
Could no longer ply their cursed
Devil-pleasing avocation!
O the infamy and horror
Of the harlot's career downward!
O that deepest degradation,
O that utter reach of woman
Into foulest sin's low revels;
Blessed be the hand that stayeth
With the strength of pure compassion
But an instant the mad current

Of the levity immoral
That sweeps ever to destruction!
  Hail unto the high ambition
Of every soul endowed with earnest
Passion for a great outcrushing
Of impurity in woman,
Of impurity in manhood!
  Hail to every soul enraptured
With the motive of upbuilding
In society of all grades
Purity of deed and action,
Purity of thought and living,
Influence and inspiration!
  Such a soul has Frances Willard,
Such have been her life's impulses,
And hearts counted now by thousands
Cherish for her thoughts of kindness,
Thoughts of loving pride and prayer.
  Words of cheer for Frances Willard,
Who has labored to the utmost,
Who has eloquently spoken,
Who has deftly, tersely spoken,
Who has wisely, strongly spoken,
Both in public and in private,
In America beloved
And across the billowed ocean,
'Gainst the alcoholic monster,
'Gainst the great destroying demon,
The accursed traffic in it,
The accursed using of it,
Anywhere beneath the heavens;

And her arguments recorded
In books, leaflets and newspapers,
For the cause that she espouses,
With their blessed influences
Reach the millions by their firesides.
  Hail unto our Frances Willard,
May she live long and grow stronger,
And the grace of God be with her
And the W. C. T. U.
  Hail to all the noble women
Who have labored and who labor
For the welfare of the nations,
The uplifting of the fallen,
The destruction of temptation!

LOVE

A saintly soul is ever giving
  Through, the sunlight and the mist,
In the Valley of the Living,
  All on which our hearts insist—
All the joy and happiness,
All the outlets from distress,
All that makes our sorrows less,
  All that heart can wish—the core
  Of her never ending store!
  She is Love, forevermore.

THE GALILEAN: A STUDY OF THE CHRIST

He was a perfect man! The turn and mould
Of his lithe form were true to artist's dream
Of beautiful proportions, and his height
Was full six feet, and he was strong of limb,
And easy in his every movement, aye,
And though he rested sparely, yet he did
Not show fatigue nor mental weariness.
The pearl-like clearness of his skin showed that
No taint of blood lived in his veins to mock
His health. His body from disease was just
As free as was his soul divine from sin,
Nor Galilee, nor other land, e'er held
Another man so physically fair,
So perfect as the gentle Nazarine.
No feature of his face lacked elegance,
The passing stranger looked and was entranced,
Old men and children, though they knew him not,
His blessing prayed, he looked so good, so kind;
His eyes were a deep blue, e'en such as seem
A soul unfathomed to contain. Ah, yes!
And rainbow tints and softened sunbeams lived
Within his glance. The yellow curls that hung
In girlish grace back from his manly brow

Were not effeminate; they suited well
His kingly nobleness, and marked his mild,
Though firm and ardent character. His step
Was confident, his manner proudly sure,
Yet gracious, courteous, benign withal,
In pleasant contrast with the studied strut
And sternly august presence of a prince
Of Earth. His features showed perfection of
Intelligent expression, shone straight-out
With open innocence and purity.
From fairhaired boyhood till mature strength
Of thirty years produced his fullest power
He bore an individuality
That turned toward him the gaze of all who passed.
The wisdom of the self important world
Was crude, misleading, when compared with his
Philosophy and logic, and with his
Abundant wisdom there was naught of hate,
Nor arrogance, nor of self-consciousness;
Not his the wisdom of the wordly-wise,
Got in adroit encounters with the fierce
Ambitions of his fellow men. His was
The inner wisdom, and the insight keen
Of a complete, acute intelligence.
He unassuming was and plainly clad,
Yet so distinguished of appearance as
To be in any group the figure most
Important. Aye! Poetical of speech
And eloquent, his very utterance
A stream of music was, sublimely sweet
And touching, beautiful and tender, with

A pathos mild, yet thrilling, that aroused
The godlike feeling in the breast of man.
The people, wheresoe'er he rested, would
Assemble, now in little groups, anon
En masse, to hear his God-born arguments,
Partake, mayhap, of his miraculous
Provisions for their creature needs, and feel
The mighty thrill of his magnetic power,
And marveling the while that fellow man
Could have such knowledge, such inscrutable,
Such comforting yet awe-inspiring force.
The proud and haughty he rebuked with ease,
Addressed with confidence the high of state
As one who spoke to children, and he lived
Aside from the gay throng to comfort those
Whose hearts were heavy—to relieve distress—
Physician to the body maimed, also
Unto the soul sin-festered; e'en restored
Again to life the stainless dead, at times
When circumstances deeply touched his heart.
His was a human sympathy in that
He sorrowed at man's woes and grievous sins,
A sympathy divine in that he sought
To make men's burdens less and clear their minds
Of evil; and to him the mob's fierce hiss
Was but a breath, the angered multitude
Misguided children all. The sullen frown
Of prejudice could lay no cloud upon
His brow, although it grieved his soul
Unto compassion's fullest depths to see
The villainy of those he came to save—

Unreasonable hate of those he came
To bless with gifts of grace and purity,
And the most wondrous gift, the richest gift,
The gift of everlasting life. The Son
Of Man, incarnate Son of God, he lived
A pure life, and labored constantly
And splendidly to lead the heart of man
Perforce into more holy and more potent ways,
With arguments both human and divine,
Until with awful desperation, and
With spite and hate inspired by Satan's wiles,
The fiend-empassioned Jews destroyed their King—
Destroyed him in his utter beauty, and
His glorious manhood, the great sacrifice
Completing that the Father had of old
Provided for the cancellation of
The sins of man—the final sacrifice
Upon the altar of the burdened world,
That tardy sympathies, estrangement and
Indifference impenetrably cold,
Might be warm-fanned into a flame that would
A remedy, a cure be, for their
Ice-willed, fierce-hearted, selfish, thoughtless ills.
In blessed state perpetual and grand,
The second person of the Trinity,
With Father, Son and Holy Ghost enthroned
Within the heavens high and in the hearts
Of saints and angels, o'er the souls of men
He broods with love divine, unspeakable,
Beyond compare, a constant diplomat,
An envoy and an advocate to plead

Earth's cause and represent his brother man
Before the throne of God and in the bright court
Perpetual and mighty of the King
Of Empires, Jehovah, Monarch of the Spheres.
O were his love—exceeding love—for man—
Transgressing, fickle, selfish, thoughtless man—
But given fair return within the bounds
Of our weak human limitations, this
Would be a better, happier world—ah, yes!—
Than dreamer ever pictured in his flights
Of grandest fancy, when his raptured thoughts
Were far awing in speculation's realm.

GLEAMS OF LIGHT

As the wavering gleams of the moonlight dart
O'er the beautiful sheen of the plain's expanse,
Searching out in the shadows each small, wee plant,
Giving hue to its flower, and fragrance too,
Giving richness and freshness and life and bloom,
With the dew and the nightwind to help, withal,
So that sunrise may shine on a lovely world,
Thus the smiles that unforced play upon the face
Of a dear friend doth beam on the soul, and bring
To a holier warmth and regard the heart
That has strayed in the cold night of hate, afar
Needing friendship that wins to nourish the bloom
That will smile in the beautiful glow of love
In the morn's happy dawn when the sun comes up.

PART III

INDIAN LEGENDS OF IOWA

O Tradition! Days of old

Still hold stories yet untold



THE CATARACT

A beauty scene in a wild demesne is a cataract I know,
That falls from the edge and down the ledge of a cliff where mosses grow,
A sheet of spray on a sunny day with smiles it plunges down,
Out of the shade, a bright cascade, near Eldorado town.

View near Turkey River in Vicinity of Eldorado

Courtesy Walter H. Beall
Publisher Argo Gazette, West Union

CHI-MONG-HA,

THE BANISHED SACHEM

A LEGEND OF THE IOWA RIVER

PART I

The autumn leaves have hung in glory on
The forest trees as many hundred times
As there are thumbs and fingers on both hands
Since first a human footfall sounded in
The Valley of the Fairy Flowered Stream.

This region had in pristine beauty lain
Since first the world awoke, unfrequented
By humankind, for it had blandly slept
Beneath a charm of legends. It was told,
Around the campfire and by aged folk,
That the Ghosts of Winds had laid a spell
Upon the land, sacred against the tread
Of man, because of its miraculous,
Its witching loveliness, and had reserved
It for His Majesty, the great Sun God,
As private hunting grounds, a pastime park,
In which in hours of respite from his reign
To revel in the pleasures of the chase.

No redman dared to set his feet upon
The venerated soil; 'twas even deemed
A sacrilege to speak of it elsewise
Than in hushed and reverential phrase.

This old and sacred superstition kept
The lovely stream, its rapids and its falls,
Its tributaries and its countless hills
And dells, its forests and broad openings,
Free from the fell brutality, the scourge
Of human carnage, such as marked that dark
And savage time, and only through the great
Ambition of a wise and mighty chief
Did the discovery come that this belief
Had no foundation but a story old,
A myth, a legend of the ancient past.

Chi-mong-ha was the sagamore, or chief,
Of the Kon-oc-was, the tribe of force and power
That introduced as food the yellow maise
To the Algonquins and the Iroquois.
In both religion and intelligence
This mighty tribe a close relation bore
To people of the far pueblo towns.
Its reigning line came, 'tis said,
From the Nahua race, the great Aztecs
Of the far southwest. In laws and customs all,
The Kon-oc-was were far superior
To wilding hordes that roamed in Tartar life
About them, and to whom they taught their weird
Mythology and superstitions fierce,

And promise of the Happy Hunting Grounds,
The sprites of help and hindrance, and such like—
The fiends that bring ere tragedy and pain—
The Ghosts of Destiny—the great Sun God,
Whose body was the mighty orb of day,
From which he sent his presence, the warm light,
To comfort men, his children, and who
When he at evening retired to rest,
Sent forth his queen, the moon—the princely stars,
His warriors—to watch the Earth, his best
And favorite creation. Aught or all
Of worthy principles, enlightenment,
Or governmental system, marriage ties,
Affection, loyalty and pride, that could
Be found among the tribal denizens
Of wilderness, were credited, in fine,
To Sun God's wise and potent influence.

Chimongha was adventurous. He looked
Toward the sacred land with longing eyes.
As sachem of his tribe it was his wont
In times of discord and of turbulance
To use such diplomatic arts as would
Most favorably impress his auditors.
Full oft had he at council-fires and feasts
Used parables and fictions in his speech
To influence his people happily;
And well he knew, from the effects produced,
These creatures of his fancy (some at least)
Would live in history. If these his own
Impossible, yet logical, deceipts

Were kept in perpetuity as facts,
Aye, told and retold, with the passing years,
Why not believe traditionary lore
Were largely fiction? Legends, e'en the best,
Resemble the improbable so much
In every case that he was led to doubt
That any were substantial in detail;
And biased by desire to explore
The beauties of the region under ban,
His infidelity became so marked
That he began to disregard e'en this
Foundational tradition of his tribe—
To look ahead to times when he would walk
The Valley of the Fairy Flowered Stream,
And occupy it with intelligent,
Picked followers, and live his life within
Its precincts glorious, despite what spell
Or ghost or sprite had laid upon't of old.
And many in authority are thus
Brought face to face with error blind—not that
They deeper thinkers are than others of
Their people, but because, perforce,
They must think more, and forc'd thought penetrates
The mists. Discoveries bring many new
Ambitions, and Ambition is too fierce
To droop beneath dark Superstition's frown.
Too true it is that many memories
Of sacred import grand are sacrificed
Upon the altar of Ambition wild,
But were it not for fierce Ambition's great,
Insatiable hunger and unrest,

Progressive thought and action would recede
Into regardless imbecility.
It better were Ambition to direct
In paths more excellent than 'twere to rail
At its great potency.

Chimongha dwelt
On this his favorite theory for moons
Enough to mark a season, then disclosed
The cherished enterprise to other chiefs;
In eloquent and thrilling periods,
Portrayed the glories of the valley wild,
Dissecting with a line of argument,
Convincing, clear, the legend that had kept
It shrouded in a veil of mystery,
And argued it a stupid sin to thus
Permit so great and fair a portion of
The Sun God's best creation to remain
In primitive disuse. What need, he asked,
Had the Omnipotent of hunting grounds?
In his opinion the Creator sought
His pleasure differently. The Sun God
Would not without important cause destroy
That which he had created, otherwise
He would not be so kind and merciful
Unto transgressing man. The charnal spear,
The cruel arrow, bludgeon or trap,
Were tools too mean for playthings for a god,
E'en if, perchance, 't were possible for gods
To stoop to cruel or insipid sport.
The Manitou devoured not his own

Creations, but subsisted on the life
That filled the vast and boundless universe
With power to swing the light of heaven above
A thousand worlds. What need had such an One,
Such Being Grand, of game or fleshy food,
Or sustenance of any sort that comes
Through agony of living beast destroyed
Amidst the vernal beauties of
A paradise it graced with living charm?
The Earth was made for man, and creatures of
The chase for his diversion and his need,
But not to be destroyed in heedless sport,
Or wanton show of cruel mastery.
Traditions, resting upon word of mouth,
And shifting with interpretation's chance,
Conflicting understandings and the faults
Of memory, should not be trusted far
Nor be relied upon as history.
Traditions that divine that any spot
Of Earth is hallowed with any charm
That would antagonize the happiness
Of man were meet for searching inquiry.
Thus argued he, and when his barborous,
His aboriginal and limited
Horizon we survey, we must admit
He argued wisely.

The assembled chiefs
Sat motionless with wonder, mute, abashed.
Had demons of the darkest night bewitched
His understandimg or dethroned his mind?

Had ghosts of madness dimmed his eyes? Had sprites
With subtle charms misled his mighty heart,
That treasons 'gainst the legends of his tribe
Should thus possess his soul?

Chimongha asked
For volunteers to follow him into
The region wonderful, to penetrate
The hidden mysteries that beckoned so
Invitingly to daring souls, but none
Responded. Sagamores and mighty chiefs,
And splendid warriors departed from
The council fire, and gloomily around
Each one there gathered soon an eager group
Of listeners. Chimongha's whilom friends
And compeers now were his most bitter foes,
Advising all to do him violence.

The Sachem was remembered lovingly
By all his people, for heroic deeds
In war and generosity in peace,
And though his sacrilegious speech had thrown
A pall of horror o'er each heart, and filled
The village with a sullen, awful fear,
Not e'en the most resentful of his tribe
Would raise a hand to do him injury,
Though each might say to each it should be done.

Again the chiefs and old men gathered round
The council fire, and tongues most eloquent
Portrayed in fierce invective and complaint
The lunacy and treason of the great

Chimongha. None defended. Sagamore,
Nor sachem wise, nor warrior, nor man
Of mighty medicine, arose to speak
In his behalf. Chimongha stood
And looked with scorn upon the multitude.
A superstition-blinded throng, they looked
Upon him as a maniac, and when
The council final resolution made
To banish him forever from the tribe,
The voiceless quiet of the caves could not
Have been less eloquent in his behalf
Than were the people who had profited
When e'er they walked with faith intelligent
The trail his guiding hand had pointed out.

With look of utter pity on their dull
Simplicity, but grip upon his heart
Of that affection which e'en yet endures
The while it is forgotton by the folk
Toward whom it yearns, Chimongha strode away,
Out, out, into the dark and silent night,
And bent his way toward the distant vale
The beauty and the mystery of which
Had lured him from the superstitions old
And terrible that held his tribesmen in
Their fearsome thrall, but opened wide, to him,
The skies of brighter days, and introduced
New fields, new glories, opportunities,
Wherein his soul could climb and grow, explore
Unfettered by restraint of ignorance
The wonders that the Manitou had made.



Gray sentinels of weathered stone
Bequeathed to us by ages gone.

A Picturesque Scene in the Catfish Valley near Dubuque.
Courtesy of Wartburg College.

PART II

Chimongha, the banished sachem, walked
Alone. The purple and the changing gold
Of autumn hung in mantling beauty on
The forest trees along the fairy stream.
The hillsides shone in mellow splendor with
The ripening grass. The falling leaves, bedight
In all the beautiful and varied hues
Of nature, lay in heaps in the ravines,
Or strewn upon the sward, or carried to
And fro by restess, shifting winds. Proud was
Chimongha's soul, as ever and anon
His vision swept the princely goodliness
Of this his new domain—a virgin land—
Bedecked in all its autumn loveliness!
The rugged bluffs, o'erhung with climbing vines
And crowned with shrubbery, the rounded hills,
Enrobed with underbrush and giant trees,
The undulating plain, the valleys broad,
The sheltered dells and sharp declivities,
'Mid which a clear and sparkling river wound
Along 'tween banks with tossing tassels lined,
Of the goldenrod and sumac, lent a sense
Of charming, lonely beauty to the scene—
A sense of quiet grandeur and repose,
Aye, such as only may be found amid
A fertile territory yet unchanged
By man's relentless, ceaseless industry.
The banished sachem felt within his soul—
His inmost being—the sublimity

He breathed and saw, but from his o'ercharged heart
The yearnings of a lonely man gushed forth
In psalm of praise, yet of petition, to
The goddess, kind, of the affections, and
Thus eloquently brave Chimongha prayed:

"O Mother! food of man's breath, Holy Air!
Lend thy attention to the sachem's prayer!
Thou that temperest the chilling wind until
It fills us with a warm and pleasant thrill;
O thou that lullest passions of the heart
Aud soothest every pain and aching smart;
O thou that feedeth, aye, the sickening soul,
With medicine ef strength to make it whole,
O warm to life of kindness, pray I thee,
Some creature of my race to live with me!
Thrice blessed art thou in the myriad arms
Of countless worshippers of thy dear charms;
By millions art thou, Holy Air, caressed,
By thousand lovers hourly art blessed.
Think of thy happy state, thy life of love
Amid the royal cherubim above,
Then look upon thy lone child, even I,
Look from thy throne of eagles' wings on high,
And in this spot of beauty here behold
A tribeless sachem, strong, not yet grown old,
The king of all this rich and radiant scene,
But where, O Holy Air! where is the queen?
My heart is filled with longings warm and strong
To hear within my wigwam's folds the song
And sweetly uttered counsels of a wife—

To add a better half unto my life.
A sachem should a leader be, but where
Will I find followers, O Holy Air!
Fill thy son's eager ears with soundful tramp
Of braves, a thousand, coming into camp.
The passion of thy breast brings to my soul
A throng of longings fond that inward roll
Upon my heart with sweet affection's voice;
Send to my arms the spirit of thy choice."

Chimongha paused. The sunlight fell upon
His massive brow and showed a face, firm, strong,
Denoting character. His restless eye
Was nervous, too, and searching, yet was mild
And kindly, while there lurked a smile beneath
The stoic sterness that became a chief.
His step was firm, his body vigorous;
He wore the garments of authority
The soft-tanned deerskin blouse and moccasins,
And leggins of the choicest mink, with stripes
Of weasel down the sides, and for a plume,
Wing feathers of the white owl woven in
A crest of fur, main of the buffalo,
But other decoration had he none.
The sachem was not vain. His dress was rich
And neat, befitting to a mighty chief
But void of polished shells and jewelery,
For love of these he held in sheer contempt
As weakness unbecoming to a man.
That he was truly great his trial proved,
Such hearts are not subdued; they mount on wings

Of inspiration in the face of toil
And difficulty, and more rapidly
Advance than lesser, tamer souls, e'en though
They favored be by influences rare
And helpful to remarkable degree.

Chimongha! Ah! the blood of ancient chiefs
Coursed through his veins. To him the solitude
Was not a mockery. His busy brain
Was peopling now the vale luxuriant
With tribesmen of his own brave flesh and blood,
In fond imagination and foresight
A line of Aztec leaders—chiefs and kings—
From the nobility of which he sprang
In regal might.

He sought to stand the head,
King, priest, physician of a mighty tribe
In which no imbecile, no clown, no weak,
Unworthy member should appear—no throng
Of unreliables to disconcert,
But every man should be a prince, a brave,
With heart unconquerable, lofty, proud,
And every squaw a princess in her lodge.

With thoughts like these astir within his brain
And trusting to the Ghosts of Destiny,
He wandered to and fro and up and down,
Exploring every nook and glade and grove,
Till frosts of autumn late bade him to seek
A sheltered place and build a wigwam, warm
And snug, before the Ghosts of Winter brought

With angry, biting winds, the ice and snow,
And reaped the leaves and put to sleep the grass
And flowers.

The hunting season was at hand.
Elk strode abroad in stately, fearless pride.
The buffalo, and bear and deer and fowl,
Were plentiful, and wandered near and far
At will, without a thought of other foe
Than wolf or panther; and the beaver, mink
And otter swam the streams without a fear.
The strutting turkey and the modest quail,
The drumming pheasant and the prarie hen,
The timid rabbit and the leaping squirrel,
A huntsman's harvest made through all the year.
The geese and ducks, and other downy birds
Of passage, came in spring and fall and lent
Their fat flocks to the hunter's wary thrift.

Down by the laughing river, 'neath a bluff
Of scraggy limestone, great, mossgrown and high
Like ancient battlement, its rough face to
The sun, the solitary sachem built
A deerskin lodge, and when the north wind bleak
Across the prairies swept, and sobbed and howled
Adown the vales and gulleys, shrieking oft
Like wraiths of madness through the forests bare,
Chimongha halted from his wandering,
By thrift well fed and comfortably housed,
He lent his thoughts to speculation much,
And wondered what the future had in store—

While dressing skins and furs he had secured
When hunting on the cloudy days, when game
Roamed freely after storms—roamed wide and long
At forage, after fasting within lair
Or shelter while the angry death-ghosts chased
The sharp winds thru the forests white with frost.

He manufactured weapons. From the ash
He made the longbow, stiff and strong, to throw
A heavy arrow; and of hickory
The short bow, light and handy, for the small
Game. Arrows of the supple ironwood, tipped
With flint stones; hatchets, lances, headed with
The choicest flintstones from the western hills.

To grind the kernals of the golden maise
He fashioned millstones of the granite rock,
The nigger-heads, strange rocks the gods had bro't
In ancient times on moving fields of ice.
For cooking game he fashioned jars and bowls
Of blue clay hardpan, flexible and smooth,
And baked them by the fire day and night
Until they were unbreakable and strong.

Thus by the fire in his migwam warm
Chimongha was employed, while sleet and snow
Upon the forest fell and blizzards swept
In triumph down the leafless vale, nor did
He languish in his solitary tent,
But braved, with huntsman's hardihood and zest,
The perils of the woodland chase, alone.

PART III

When fairies of the Spring had scattered far
Aud lavishly the flowers o'er the plains,
And clothed the wildwood with a princely garb of
green,
And decked with plumes of the wild apple all
The hillsides in the sunshine, once again
Chimongha wandered through the vistas of
This paradise elysian that grew
The brighter as the Angels of the Winds
Of Summer nourished into richer life
The flora of this soul-inspiring land
By all good angels favored, yea, and blessed.

One calm evening as the southwind
Whispered softly in the treetops,
Fondly moving every leaflet,
Chimongha strolled down by the river,
Watched the beauty of the sunset.
Viewed the blazing splendor round it,
Wondered if within such glory
Lived the cherubim of heaven.
As he gazed a dulcet murmur
Softly stole into his senses,
Sweetly charmed him as he listened,
Breathless, pulseless, so intently
That his heart near ceased its beating.
Louder came the sound so charming,
As with keen anticipation
Further strolled he up the river,

Stronger, sweeter, grew the music,
Till a song in plain words uttered
Filled the chief with consternation,
Which again was turned to rapture.
Angels could not sing more sweetly,
Nor the ringing of the echoes
Chime a harmony more pleasing.
One voice of the richest trebble
Carrolled when the others rested:

"The waves, soft-dimpling, lap thy shore,
O River of Flowers, and o'er
Thy bosom brown
Long shadows reach from rock and tree,
And Nature rests awhile to see
The sun go down.

"Ne'er did I breath of airs more sweet,
Ne'er have I known a scene to greet
Me with such bright
And beautiful displays of all
The earthly raptures that enthrall,
Bewitch, delight!

"Fair flowers and fruits and game grow here
In bounty great—how they would cheer
My father's band!
Ah me! the ghost with heart of dove
Must cast his fondest look of love
Upon this land.

"This fairy vale, this happy place,
Must know Chimongha's noble face—
This is the stream!
Yon bluff, kissed by the setting sun,
High beetling, looks much like the one
Seen in the dream."

Chimongha heard and wondered; in his ear
The melody, the beauty of the voice,
A something also not defined in these,
Were prone to linger, and his heart was filled
With new sensations, but the mention of
His name caused him to seek with look perplexed
The singer of the song:

"O Holy Air!
Has human sight e'er met on earth so fair,
So exquisite, so radiant a girl?—
Eyes like the twinkling stars, teeth like the pearl!
Is there among the sprites that round thee swarm
One angel with such naive, sylphic form?
Is it a vision that delights my eyes,
Or seraph from the rare and radiant skies,
Left by the glorious receding day
To be swept up by the first morning ray?"

This was the rapturous soliloquy,
Half prayer, that bursted from the sachem's soul,
As his approaching footsteps brought him near
Unto the singer. Slender maid was she,
Of scarcely eighteen summers, yet with air
And bearing of an individual

Who has true confidence, the fruit of well
Defined experience in exploits that
Successful are, she looked a queen, although
As truly wild as wilderness can make
Its native children, she divinely sat
With careless ease upon a sapling bent
So that in tossing jauntily thereon
Her bare and shapely feet, in dimpled mirth,
Would plunge beyond her ankles in the stream
O'er which the sapling leaned. Her raven locks
Hung negligently far below her waist,
And moved with pleasing coquetry upon
The buoyant breeze as she swayed to and fro.

A dozen paces to the right a squad
Of warriors were going into camp,
The while young women of the company
Were cutting up a roebuck for the night's
Repast, and crooning low sweet melodies
The while. The camping band were not the dark,
The copper-colored savages that roamed
In cruel warbands o'er the plains, or made
The woodland regions hideous with yells
And massacre. They were the paler race,
The nobler people from the far southwest,
The race of princes great, Chimongha's race,
For mental calibre and manly strength,
With physical and moral courage, ment
That people with endowments such as these
Could lead the wilding hordes, and shape affairs
For those who lacked executive ideas

Or who were slack in profitable force.
E'en later in our history, the chiefs
Of greatest influence and mental strength
Have been of fairer color than the tribes
O'er which they ruled, and it has argued been
That they inherited superior
Gifts through good fortune individual
From higher ancestry; and that the blood
Of prehistoric greatness still crops out
At intervals, and lending vigor and
Surpassing mental strength and spirit to
The lucky scion e'er.

Chimongha knew
The group before him was of the fair race
Which leaders gave of power to the hordes
Of wandering children of the northern plains.
With dignity he strode toward the camp,
The singing group he kindly welcomed, and
In conversation realizing soon
The fact that they were also fugitives,
Reassured the braves with sign of peace.

A superstition of the great south-tribe
Had banished proud Chimongha. This small band,
Which represented still a larger, had
With relatives been persecuted by
The savages that roamed the rugged north,
The land to which their fathers had repaired
A thousand moons before, called thither for
Their captainship, their genius in the arts
Of government and tribal polity.

The rule of these intelligent, highborn
And splendid sagamores, barred out the rude
And hideous tortures that were practiced on
The prisoners of war and other foes.
Rules such as these, put into force upon
A people scarcely lifted from the beasts,
Were a continuous and fretful thing
To wildmen, pantherlike, bloodthirsty, prone
To revel in excesses bestial.
The second generation 'rose in mad,
Determined, fierce rebellion 'gainst these strong,
Humane restraints. The princes found themselves
Amid incessant treachery and hate,
But still were not permitted to withdraw,
But were compelled to practice the austere
Important functions of the chieftain's role.
The savages grew insolent, more rude,
As time passed on, till order was unknown.
All leadership was unavailing then
To quell the anarchistic spirit fierce.
A sachem's life, his kindred and his all,
Were in a place of insecurity
And constant danger. Finally to add
To manifold insults, a vulgar dog
Who coveted the sachemship, stood forth
Amid the powwow at the council fire
Demanding that in marriage should be bound
The elder sachem's daughter, beautiful
Monona, unto him fore'er, forthwith.
Refusal caused a bitterness that grew
Until it culminated in a burst

Of fury, and a vicious, fierce attack
Upon the chiefs. Strong princes and fair squaws
Defended like the heroes that they were,
Defeating promptly and decidedly
The dusky swarm of savages, who fell
Back, in the humiliation of defeat,
Yet sulking, angry, as they nursed revenge.

The princes and their families then withdrew
With thier effects full quickly toward the south
Embarrassed by their recent warriors,
Who dogged their trail for two long moons until
At last those tragic hunting grounds were cleared
And from a peaceful tribe, the Chippewas,
They learned of great Chimongha's banishment
From the nation of the Konocwahs. Of him
They knew through good report, and had surmised
That he was of the pure Aztec blood
And kindred of their own. Surmising, too,
That his proud soul would lead him straight unto
The region of his fancy, they had changed
Their course and headed for the sacred stream,
But when they reached the fascinating vale,
No evidence of human resident
Could be descried.

Their little company
Of fifty souls felt graciously secure
Within this charming valley by the clear
And sparkling waters of the river, which

They named the Ay-ah-wah (Place Beautiful).
They made a temporary camp, straightway,
Erecting lodges of the basswood bark,
Held into place by the long, slender vines
Of the Virginia creeper, and began
Providing for their future maintenance
And welfare thoroughly.

One night the girl,
Monona, had a dream. Chimongha's lodge
And all the exquisite surroundings of
His camp appeared to her in this strange dream.
The river wider was and deeper, seen
In this fair dream, than where their lodges stood,
So inference was drawn that he, beyond
A doubt, had settled farther down the stream.
Monona's dreams were never questioned. She
Was princess medicine, with gifts divine,
And the Great Spirit gave her sight to see
Correctly in all visions of august
Importance. Hence, the princess with a guard,
Her maiden train and twelve young warriors,
Was sent forthwith down stream upon a raft
In quest of great Chimongha's lodge, and reached
The fair vicinity of his abode
At sunset on the seventh day, and he
At once bestowed his praise upon them and
His lavish hospitality. Next day
He sent a scout in haste up stream to ask
The main part of the band to hurry on

And join him in his valley beautiful.
The meeting was accomplished in due time;
Then came a season of festivity
And joy and ceremonial exchange.
The crowning feature of the program wild
And beautiful and eloquent was the
Election of Chimongha as the chief
Of chiefs, outranking all the sagamores.
The tribal name of Ayahwah—the name
Unto the valley given—was the choice
Of all the adults at the council fire.

The Ayahwahs soon mingled with a band
Of friendly Sioux, found in the neighborhood,
Adopting them; a strange alliance, but
It proved to be a wise one when the hour
Of peril came. The Sioux were warriors
With iron hearts, and hunters of great fame.
Their personality and dialect
Were pressed upon the Ayahwahs as time
Progressed, until the softly spoken name,
The musical and rythmic "Ayahwah,"
Became the sharply spoken "Iowa,"
The tribal name enduring until now,
And now perpetuated in the name
Of a great commonwealth, a region vast,
Containing all the sylvan hunting grounds
Of "The Place Beauitful, "—the valley of
The Iowa,—and more, of vales and broad
Savannahs rich and fair, and wooded hills
And templed cliffs, and lakes of witching charm.

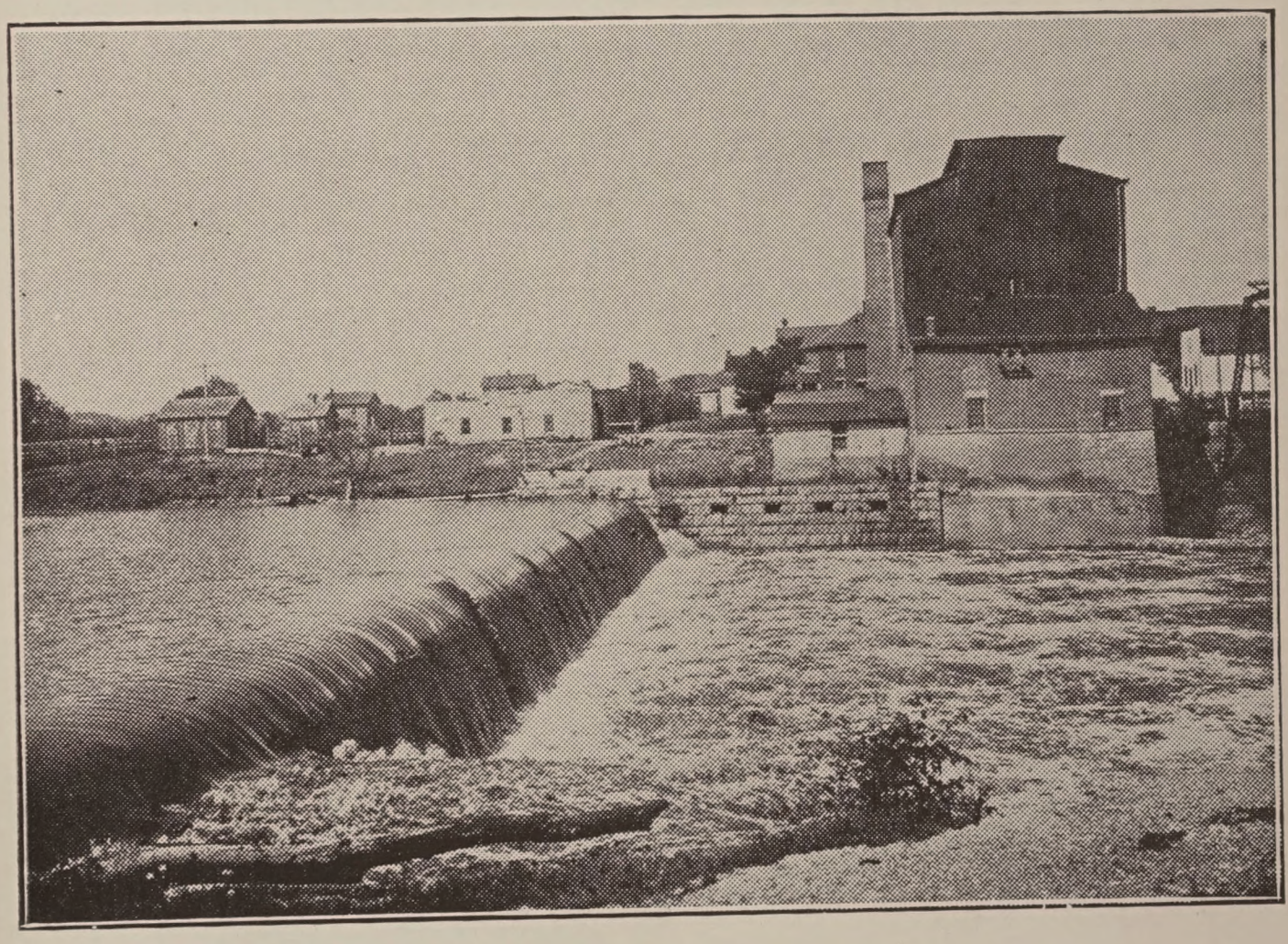
PART IV

Chimongha looked with loving eyes upon
Monona. Her intelligence and wild,
Delightful beauty, spoke unto his heart
With eloquence entrancing, and the maid
Admired the Sachem great, so wonderful
He seemed in his great wisdom and superb
Ambitions, and one morning as they met
By accident outside the camping ground,
Chimongha said:

"Monona, thou wouldst grace
The Sachem's lodge. Chimongha loveth thee,
Be thou his wife." Monona answered low,
"Chimongha, he hath spoken; it is well."

Affectionate caresses sealed their troth,
But scarcely had Monona felt the strong
Pulsations of her lover's heart uoon
Her breast, as close she nestled in his arms,
When the weird warwhoop of an old Sioux brave,
One of their recently adopted friends,
Its wild and startling warning sent through ut
The valley, and a scout came running to
Chimongha with the news that out beyond
The river bluffs Apaches fiercely swarmed,
In numbers to bewilder, and arrayed
For battle, were preparing to attack
The Ayahwahs in force. When duty calls,
And patriots assemble to defend

O the mighty force of the water-course
As it flows with awful strength
Over the flume with roar and boom,
Sweeping the dam's full length!—
Strong as the bent of sentiment
Of patriot hearts and strong,
When the souls of men o'er hill and glen
Fight ignorance and wrong.



VIEW OF THE CLERMONT DAM

The Electric Plant which furnishes Power and Light to many Towns in the "Switzerland of Iowa."

Courtesy Mr. Walter H. Beall,
Publisher Argo-Gazette, West Union

Their land against invasion and their homes
Against despoiling hands, e'en love must rest
Its issue. Within less than half an hour
Chimongha had his forces marshaled out
Upon a small plateau, good vantage ground,
Surrounded by a sloping meadow broad,
But furnishing a quick retreat into
The forest, should disaster meet their arms.
The mound was crowned with egg-shaped cobble-
stones,
Formidable and disconcerting when
As weapons they were used in close combat.
The Ayahwahs were skilled in hand to hand
Encounter, and the warclub and the spear
Were handled by them dexterously. With
The bow and arrow expert and well armed
They waited calmly, grandly, and as still
As the mysterious silence that prevails
Before a storm.

But see! Demoniac
Apaches, fell scourge of the western plains
Swarm o'er the bluff like demons of the night,
And throw their bodies into hideous
Contortions, lashing comrades near with whips,
Inflicting on each other and themselves
Indignities innumerable, fierce,
To stimulate their fury as they run.
Hallooing, yelling like ten thousand wolves,
And bellowing like bulls, and shrieking loud
As only savage or demented men

Can shriek, on, on, they come, closer they draw
Unto the band of patriot Ayahwahs.
To yield is death, and death, too, to retreat!
To fight is surely death against such odds!
Chimongha! hero of a dozen fields,
What good thy valor now? A few strong strokes—
Thy noble arm may fall, thy brave heart beat
No more, thy voice may be forever stilled.
Chimongha is a brave—a warrior—
He knows not death. Ten thousand ghosts of death
Could bring no tremor to his nerves, no dread
Into his heart. In voice stentorian
And clear he shouts:

"Oho, ye Ayahwahs!
Fight, for the God of War looks on! Stand firm!
And let the ghosts of battle fill you with
The rigors meet for this emergency!
O ghosts of battle come! Chimongha prays!
Come to the Ayahwahs ye wraiths of war!
Witness ye heavens now, that where we stand
A struggle will take place fit for the eyes
Of gods and angels! To your clubs, ye braves!
Ye women ply the bows; ye children, too,
Hurl rocks and darts and arrows, that it may
Be said that ev'n babes fought for Chimongha,
Their faces glowing with the pride of war!
Oho, ye desert fiends! Come on! Ye swarms
Of animals, ye raging beasts, ye men
With fangs, ye eaters of your fellow men,
Come on! Oho, ye Ayahwahs, shoot when

Your aim is sure, strike when you can and waste
No strength, no arrows! Fight, for the spirits of
Your sires look on!"

It was a noble sight,
That band of warriors, calm, dignified,
Surrounded by their children and their squaws
Awaiting what the gods of battle hold
In store for hearts that fight in self-defense
And purpose glorious—crowning the mound
That soon might be their bier.
Without excitement they began to shoot
At intervals into the surging host
Of fierce Apaches circling round them on
The plains below. At every shot there fell
An enemy amid the howls and shrieks
Demoniac of vengeance from his mates.
On came the howling throng, on up the steep,
Resistless as the waves of ocean when
The tide comes in. A rain of arrows, all
With poisoned tips, defended their advance,
And O a dozen wounds flowed fresh among
The Ayahwahs before the fight was hand
To hand. The Ayahwahs were not dismayed,
But stood their ground. The mad Apaches shot
At random, so their arrows spent their force
Amid the prairie grass. Chimongha's braves
Took aim whene'er they drew the bow, and laid
A foe with every arrow parted with.
But now the fight is hand to hand! The spear,
The club and hatchet cut and maim and kill!

Like unto tigers of the desert wastes
The wild men spring upon the Ayahwahs
And fight an hour's space. Ho! they fall back!
But O sad sight! A ghastly heap of slain,
Like butchery or awful pestilence,
Where ghosts of wrath have heaped a sacrifice
Of human beings to the God of War,
Bestrews the mound. Where are the children brave
Of "The Place Beautiful"? Chimongha, where
Is he—and where his great ambitions—where?
But why do the Apaches beat retreat
With such great haste? Aha! the Ayahwahs
Do not compose that wall of slain, but safe
Behind it are with steady aim and swift
Engagement shooting deadly arrows at
Defeated, routed and bewildered foes.
Met with resistance unaccountable,
Inflicting many blows, without effect,
While those received were deadly in their force,
The cowed Apaches feared that they had met
The Gods of Horror and of Ancient Time
In conflict, and distraught with fear,
Were fleeing in disorder from the spot;
But even fear could not eradicate
The diabolical desire from
Their hearts to capture prisoners of war
For torture, and no savages so well
The arts of torment knew, for they could keep
Their victims in excruciating pain
And constant agony for hours and days—
E'en weeks and months—without inflicting death,

And when such tortured person was released,
As sometimes brave, distinguished warriors were,
The anguish and the agony that he
Had undergone, left him a weakling wreck,
A raving madman or an imbecile
It were a mercy to dispatch. O brave,
O gallant Ayahwahs, O let not one
Of thy good, valiant band be tortured with
Such wanton cruelties. Count thy dead braves.
Ten lie in death. Now, count thy wounded ones;
They all bear wounds enough, but twenty are
So weak they cannot stand. Chimongha, where
Is he? Safe, wounded, dead? Not heard his voice
Of firm authority, not seen his tall,
Commanding form. His white plume is not seen—
Not waving with a haughty toss above
The tallest of his warriors now. Not seen
Among the slain or prostrate ones, he must
Have fallen in the deadly fray. Oho!
What's that the stark Apaches hurriedly
Are dragging through the grass? Monona cries
That 'tis the chief, and with a heart-born shriek
Of anguish and thrice shouting loud the name
"Chimongha!" grasps a spear, though bleeding from
A cruel wound, she calls unto the braves
To follow. Out, on, o'er the pile of slain,
And down the sloping plain where prairie grass
And flowers wild are trodden to the sod
By feet of savage hordes, the beautiful
And brave girl leads a charge impetuous
And fierce unto the rescue. With the strength

Of utter desperation on they dash,
Scarce fifty noble souls, with shouts of cheer
Conveying to their captured chief their brave
Intent his rescue to effect. Aha!
They on the horde of wild Apaches spring
As though to fight a thousand were but play
Or pastime worthy of a holiday.
Behold amid the carnage terrible,
Amid the pandemonium that reigns,
The rescue is achieved with quick success.
The thongs are severed that Chimongha bind;
Monona kneels above him as the fight,
Again renewed, roars on with savage cry.
She wipes his wounds caressingly with the
Soft, grateful folds of her white deerskin robe.
He had been lassoed with a lariat,
And dragged for many rods across the plain.
Bleeding and bruised, so weak he scarce could stand,
E'en though hls wounds were dressed, they helped
him back
Unto the mound, soon as the braves had gained
Their second, final victory on the field.

The wretched horde, defeated, disappeared,
Up, o'er the beetling bluff down which they had
So recently and furiously climbed,
And ne'er again were the Apaches seen
So far toward the rising sun, but dwelt
Amid the deserts of the mountain land,
Retreating as the Cheyennes and the Sioux
Usurped the ranges of the buffalo.

Chimongha's band removed their wounded to
Their camp, and with sad ceremonies weird
Gave martial honor to the dead who fell
In brave defence of home and family
And hunting ground and friend, removing foe
And comrade, all the fallen braves, unto
A place retired and honored sepulture.

The Ayahwahs increased and flourished as
The years went by. Chimongha's fame arose
To heights of fabulous report, and he
Was known to distant tribes as coming from
The clouds with wisdom from the great Sun God,
And many were the proverbs that he spoke,
The teachings and the wisdom that he spread
Abroad, and many sagamores from strange
And distant peoples visited his tent,
And in his wigwam sat and smoked the pipe
Of peace beside the fire, while listening to
The music of his voice, enchanted by
The power of his eloquence, and viewed
The beauty of his queen. Monona sat
Within his lodge, the comeliest of squaws,
And wise,—and ever was "big medicine"
In matters of the heart, and lovelorn maids
Full oft resorted to her tepee in
Their quest of knowledge of the arts of love.
A mother of romance was she instead
Of being mother of a race of chiefs,
Although her son became a sagamore
Of great renown upon the battlefield.

These ancient folk are seen by us through dim,
Uncertain legend, but the Valley of
The Fairy Flowered stream is just as fair
Today as when Chimongha hunted deer
Along its banks in that far distant day,
And "The Place Beautiful" holds us enthralled
As surely as it did the beautiful
Monona, when she sang that summer eve
The while she teetered on the swaying bough
And bathed her comely feet in girlish play
And girlish grace, there, in the waters of
The comforting, refreshing Iowa.

KIND WORDS

An angel-serenade
  To hearts that are broken
Is the gentle love-raid
  Of words kindly spoken.

THE SWIMMING HOLE

Here on a shore that I adore
I watch wee Wapsie's tide
Move like a dream the while I seem
Close to the deified;
Here the finny tribe in peace imbibe
The deep pool's nourishment,
And turtles swim along the brim
In tranquil, dumb content.



Scene on Little Wapsie, Below "Old Brick Yard," Sumner

The rock-strewn beach in easy reach
Of shade and leafy screen
Makes it the place for swimmer's grace
And naiad frolics e'en;
To plunge or wade 'neath sun or shade,
The naked youngster here
Can cheer his soul in the "swimmin' hole,"
With nought at all to fear.

THE PAWNEE LOVERS

A LEGEND OF LOST ISLAND LAKE

Wave-dimpled lake! I dream,
As I gaze on thy blue,
Laughing waters—ah, dream!—
That I hear the halloo
Of the wild, painted brave,
Who once lived on thy shore,
Echo up from his grave
To resound evermore
Through his old hunting ground—
His revered hunting ground!

And my thoughts wander back
Through the stories of old,
Down the dim, fading track
Of tradition,—unrolled
Are the scrolls of the past
To the eyes of my dream,
But my heart stands aghast
At the red bloody stream
That flows down through the years—
Through those far away years!

To roam on the prairie
  Was the lot of the race
That peopled this area,
  And there was ample space
For all tribes to enjoy
  For long stretches around
The wild huntsman's employ
  On a rich hunting ground,
But they wrangled and quarreled—
Fought madly and quarreled!

Thus 'tis ever with man,
  Whether civilized or
Not, he takes if he can,
  In the fortunes of war,
The estates of his neighbor,
  And he takes greater pride
In war than in labor;
  Either struts on the side
Of conquest, or bows down—
To the victor bows down!

But my dream again turns
  Through the silence of time,
While thy bright bosom spurns,
  With a beauty sublime,
The caress of the breeze—
  Again turns, and I gaze
In mild, pleasure-toned ease
  On the scenes of old days;

Scenes wild and romantic—
Superbly romantic!

And a green island floats
  As in days long ago,
Midst a score of small boats,
  On thy wave to and fro,
And the trees nod in beauty
  Over deerskin tepees—
In tall stately beauty!—
  In the soft summer breeze,
On this wild wizzard island—
This old, legended island!

O'er thy bosom this isle
  Floated ever, O lake,
Like the heart of a smile,
  And the course it would take
Was the course of the gale,
  As a raft wafts along
When the wind fills its sail
  With an impetus strong,
But it ne'er touched thy beach—
E'er stopped short of thy beach.

Charming lake, the tepees
  That I see in my dream
On the isle 'neath the trees,
  While serene sunbeams stream
O'er thy light choppy waves,
  Are the tents of the wild

Pottawatatamie braves
Who in past years beguiled
Their days in this region—
This fair, blooming region!

And I see the bright eyes
  Of the laughing Winole,
The delight of her wise,
  Aged father's proud soul,
As she sits at the door
  Of his painted tepee,
Singing songs o'er and o'er
  Of her love, a Pawnee
From the plains farther south—
The fair land of the south!

But a tremulous sound
  Now and then chokes her voice,
And she glances around—
  Sadly around! Her choice
Is against the command
  Of the chief of the tribe,
Who himself seeks her hand
  In wedlock, and a bribe
Has offered her lover—
To buy off her lover!

Would the brave Waugama
  Take the gift of the chief?
"May I ne'er see the day—
  I would die mad with grief,"

Is the thought of the maiden;
  Then she corals again
A song that was laden
  With the joy of the wren,
And she smiles at her fears—
Gaily laughs at her fears

Now she breathes a low prayer,
  And full on my vision
A young man appears;—there
  Is manly decision
And a firm, cogent grace,
  And a comely uprightness
Plainly writ on his face,
  And a steady brightness
Calmly shines in his eyes—
Firmly shines in his eyes!

It is brave Waugama,
  And he comes on a horse
From his lodge far away,—
  Like a pang of remorse!
Like a wild rush of air!
  For the cold message brief
And the offer unfair
  From his rival, the chief,
Has filled him with madness—
With jealousy's madness!

He is met on the shore
  By the smiling Winole—

On the lake's sandy shore
  By the bright eyed Winole!—
And she takes him across
  To her home on the isle
In a boat. Ah, the toss
  Of her head! Ah the smile
On her face as she rows—
For her brave lover rows!

Waugama is a man
  Of brave deeds and renown,
And my eyes do not scan
  In the Indian town
Even one to excel
  Him in sinew and form;
But I see a mad hell
  Seething there that will storm
Forth upon him in rage—
Soon in jealousy's rage!

There has gathered two groups,
  One around the mad chief,
And the other; with hoops
  Of approval and brief,
Hardy comments, around
  Waugama and Winole
And the echoes resound
  With the defiant roll
Of the rattling war-drum—
The long-buried war-drum!

Waugama's group is small;
He commands his brave friends
To secure the canoes—all
Nimbly rush to the ends
Of the isle, and the boats
Are released quickly and
Shoved out from the floats
Attached to the island,
Out, O lake, on thy wave—
Friendly, life-giving wave!

When Winole's father old
Sees his child safe from harm
In the strong, willing hold
Of her fond lover's arm,
He turns toward the chief,
And in accents of rage
Cries: "Would you be a thief
And rob me in my age
Of my only Winole—
Of my cherished Winole?

"Would you rob him who made
You the chief of this tribe—
The Pawnee who has stayed
Years by you and your tribe?
By the slow smoke that curls
From the graves of my dead
By my boys and my girls
And my wife lying dead—

I hurl a curse upon you—
This island and you!"

But I see other boats
  Drawn up high on the beach,
And the chief wildly gloats
  Upon these; they're in reach!
He yells forth a command,
  And by fifty wild men
They are launched from the land,
  On thy waters, and then
Comes the hard race for life—
Frantic, wild race for life!

As I look, in my dream
  I see dark clouds arise
From the far west's extreme
  To the uppermost skies,
While the resonant roar
  Of the thunder's deep bass
Jars the turf on thy shore,
  And fierce lightnings race
Up and down the dull sky—
Brightly flash in the sky!

A great wind-cloud descends—
  A wild-wailing cyclone—
As Winole and her friends
  Reach the land—where alone
They stand on the prairie!
  The fair island is gone!

Not a solitary
Boat is now seen upon
Thy huge, high-surging waves—
Splashing, billowy waves!

Filled with awe is each heart
In that small, frightened group,
And the teardrops they start
And the eyelids they droop,
As the braves and squaws look
In vain o'er the expanse
Of thy waters—ah, look!
Do they stand in a trance?
Is their island home lost—
Dashed to pieces and lost?

It is done, and the skies
Give as kindly a smile
As e'er raptured the eyes
On the place where the isle
Was destroyed by the storm!
Of their foes not a trace
Can be seen, and warm
Come the winds o'er the face
Of the green, level plains—
O'er the vast grassy plains!

Thus were lost the strange isle
Pottawatamies gone!
And Pawnees the while
Ruled this land of dawn,

Till the Sioux and Cheyenne
  Claimed the ground as their own,
Roaming upland and fen
  From the south to Pipestone
As their great hunting ground—
As their best hunting ground!

But the vision it fades,
  As a dream of the night
Sinks away in the shades
  Of the past, and the bright
Day spreads out o'er a scene
  That is good, debonair;
Still the prairies are green,
  But a race that is fair,
Wise and cultured, now lives—
In this happy land lives!

Ornate homes, mammoth barns,
  And tall silos are seen,
And drained are the tarns,
  And broken the sheen
Of the stretches of land
  With orchards and groves,
And cities are fanned
  By the breezes, and droves
Of cattle are grazed—
Where the buffalo grazed!

The wild grasses that grew
  Like a robe o'er the plains,

Kissed by sunlight and dew
  Have given way to grains
By husbandmen planted,
  And the sailboat now skims
Over thy waves enchanted,
  And the motorboat swims
Where once swam the canoe—
The wild redman's canoe!

But thy waves say "Winole,"
  And they say "Wagama,"
As to shoreward they roll,
  Since that far, olden day;
O a breath of romance
  Sweetly ladens the air,
And the lover will glance
  Into dear eyes that care,
When "he" walks by "her" side—
On thy shore by her side!

HURRAH FOR THE WINDS

Hurrah for the winds of the western plains,
  The breezes so wild and free,
With health for our lungs and wealth for our gains
  And filling our hearts with glee!

PRAIRIE FLOWER OF THE PONCAS

A LEGEND OF THE LITTLE SIOUX

On the prairies of the sunset,
By a clear and sparkling river,
By the River of Big Fishes,
Little Sioux, the white men named it,
Lived the maiden, Prairie Flower,
In the lodge of Beak, her father,
In the old chief Gray Wolf's village,
Long before the paleface trespassed
On the virgin western prairies

Eyes that twinkled like the starbeams
Tresses black and silken, flowing
Like the drooping wings of angels,
Fingers like the touch of morning
As it lifts the waking eyelids
Feet that trod the velvet grasses
Like the breathing of a spirit,
Voice as sweet and softly charming
As the birdnotes of the daybreak;
Thus was bless'd the good Beak's daughter

And her features and her figure
Were so comely that the Poncas
Fondly named her Prairie Flower.
Loved was she by all the people,
Young and old, both male and female,
Warriors grave and prattling children;
And she loved the world she lived in,
Loved her kindred and her neighbors,
Loved the broad and pretty prairies,
Loved the wigwams of her village,
Loved the sky that hung above her,
Loved the daylight and the darkness.
All the wild delights she noted,
Pets to her all beasts and birds were;
And the "ha ha" of the river
As it babbled o'er the ripples,
And the note of lonely plover,
Nervous yelping of the gray wolf
Solitary in the distance,
And the night-hawk's plaintive whistle,
Gutt'ral call of lonesome ground owl
Answered faintly by the echoes,
And the trebble of the frog notes,
And their tenor, bass and alto,
Coming from the sloughs and river,
Were to her a pleasant chorus,
Filling every night with music.

Let us look now for a moment
At the country of the Poncas;
Let us look upon the beauty

Of the land of Prairie Flower.
Broad and rolling was the prairie,
Green it was in happy June time,
Smiling 'neath the summer sunbeams.
On the mounds and sloping hillsides,
On the levels and the ridges,
Roamed antelope and wild horses,
Roamed the buffalo and roebuck,
And great elk with spreading antlers,
Grazing all the joyous summer.

On the uplands in the morning
Crowed the strutting prairie rooster,
Proudly crowed and musically,
Underneath the bluejoint grasses
On mounds built by pocket gophers,
And the hens and younger chickens
Looked with pride upon his glory.

Roamed the large game o'er the prairie,
Unmolested by the Indians,
Only when for food they hunted
For the frigid days of winter,
As they lived on small game mostly,
In the hot months of the summer,
When venison and beef would sour
If at once they were not eaten;
And the small game, which was plenty,
Could be taken just as needed.
Here and there a slough pond nestled,
Where the muskrat, coy and simple,

Built his house of reeds and rushes,
Shapen like a haycock built it,
With its base down in the water,
And its rounded top erected
With a snug nest fixed within it,
Just a step up from the water.
Some ponds, larger than the others,
Had an open space of water
In the center where the rushes
Could not grow in the deep water,
Where the mallard, teal and whistler
Passed the days in constant swimming,
Catching frogs, tadpoles and minnows,
Now and then on green growth dining;
And the snipe and plover waded
In the shallows of these duck ponds
Where the moss and water grasses
Made the footing soft and springy.

Through a bottom wide and level
In a winding course the river
Laughed and prattled over rapids;
Here and there in pools it rested,
Where a sharp bend, called a pocket,
Checked the water's onward progress,
Or where beaver had cut willows
From the river's willowed margin
And dammed up the rushing water,
So their little ones could paddle
Without danger from the current.
In the freshet flow of springtime,

In the time of the high water,
Came the muskalunge and catfish,
Came the buffalo and sturgeon,
And the bass and pike and redhorse,
From the great Missouri river,
From the turbulent Big Muddy,
Seeking in great schools the shallows
Of the brooklike upper waters,
Ere the spawning season opened,
And were captured in great numbers
As they struggled up the rapids.

Mink and otter, ducks and wild geese,
Game of water, birds of passage,
Nested there in great profusion,
So that feathers, meat and peltries
Of the finer sorts were plenty,
Making all the Poncas happy.

On the prairie's round abutment,
Which walled in the river bottom
With a line abrupt, distinctive,
Boldly marking upland edges,
Groves of poplar, ash and basswood
Could be seen occasionally,
Saved by some good freak of nature
From the yearly prairie fires—
Camping places goodly sheltered
From the biting winds of winter
And the fierce sunrays of summer.
Like a harmony of nature

Was the undulating prairie,
Reaching off to kiss the mirage
Of the glimmering horizon,
And the simple, rugged Poncas,
Without luxuries or riches,
Without statesmanship or logic,
Lived in tribal peace and plenty,
Thankful to the Ghost of Heaven.

All were happy but Big Antlers,
Gray Wolf's son, pride of the Poncas.
Antlers loved the Prairie Flower,
But he awkward was before her,
Awkward was before all women,
And he moaned about his passion,
Had the will but not the courage
To propose to prairie Flower,
Brooding o'er his love in silence.
Could a women with such graces
That the chiefs of other nations
Came to look upon her beauty,
Love an awkward man like Antlers?
Could a girl like prairie flower,
With a voice like unto angels,
And a tender ear for music,
And a heart that made a playmate
Of every helpless little creature,
Love a rough man like big Antlers?
Ah, but no one knows a women,
With herself she's not acquainted;

Long the dainty Prairie Flower
Had admired awkward Antlers,
But she neither spoke nor looked it
And he daily went despairing,
Until the Omahas one day
Appeared near unto the village,
With a warwhoop and a challenge
That sent the old war blood to coursing
Through the veins of every Ponca.
Rushed the braves unto their weapons,
Donned their warpaint and their feathers,
And by brave Big Antlers headed
Were about to meet the foeman,
When Big Antlers, in his war dress,
Felt a slight form clinging to him,
Heard a sweet-toned voice imploring
That he rush not into danger—
'Twas the form of his sweet angel,
'Twas the voice of Prairie Flower.
Proud and happy was Big Antlers,
And with words assuring left her
And led out the Ponca forces;
With strong heart he charged the foeman
That had come to cause disturbance
And bring sorrow to his village.
Fled the Omahas before him
He came at them with such ardor,
And the victory completed,
Back came Antlers and his brave men.
All his awkwardness had left him,
And he made the maiden happy,

And himself made happy also
On the prairies of the sunset,
By the River of Big Fishes,
By the clear and sparkling river,
Little Sioux, pale faces call it.

OCTOBER IN IOWA

Grand Iowa! thou art ablaze
With glory fields of golden maize;
The Artist of the Autumn, He
Has painted bright each shrub and tree
In colors that delight the eye,—
And spread o'er all a bright blue sky;
The meadows and the roadsides too
In happy green all smile at you;
The air is crisp, not sultry now,
Nor chilly, either. I allow,
The weather it is never more
Agreeable to lung and pore
Than when October's splendid sun
Bestows his smile on everyone
In Iowa, and winds are fair,
And autumn odors in the air.

PUCKAWATAMA'S REVENGE

A LEGEND OF THE WAPSIPINICON

A party of twenty stalwart Sacs,
With never a thought of foe's attacks,
Went hunting and trapping within the bounds
Of their long accustomed hunting grounds,
In the primal days before the whites
Usurped the red man's ancestral rights.
They left their village amid the cheers
Of gay groups of their warrior peers,
And happy children that played about
In many a wild delightful rout;
Some carried the smile of wife or child
Away in their hearts, others the mild,
Coy glance of a maiden's fond dark eyes—
And they rowed away 'neath sunny skies.

On the upper Wapsipinicon
Their midsummer hunting was begun;
Far away from noises of the camp,
Far away from the sound of horse's stamp.
They went to the dark and solemn wood
Where game was less wary, hunting good,
Beside the river where they could use
Their handy and strong dug-out canoes.

The plump brown bear was a splendid prize
For the hunting Sac's bold enterprise;
The stately elk and the browsing moose,
The stalking crane and the fat wild goose,
Were easy prey for the marksman true
Who was ambitious to dare and do.
They hunted and slaughtered, day by day,
A toothsome, nourishing array
Of fowl and venison, and all the game
Known to aboriginal fame.
In the open day they hung their meat
To dry in the summer sun's fierce heat,
And some they cured with coarse rock salt,
During their famous hunting halt,
Until with hampers and sacks all full
They began their way down stream to pull,
Merry at heart, toward home with vim,
Passing the long days with chant and hymn.
At night they camped on grassy bank
'Neath the waving basswoods green and bank
And dried in the early morn the damp
Of dew from their clothing in their camp
By cheerful fires, and with pleasure looked
On their ample breakfast as it cooked
Thus three days passed on their homeward ride,
And they camped upon the riverside
On the evening of the third day
Under a hill that was just half way
From their erstwhile campground up the stream,
And they raised their lodge's green crossbeam
Just as the darkness began to creep

Up the rugged hillside tall and steep.
They raised the lodge, for the weather's face
Wore a scowling, angry, dark grimace;
Great, billowy clouds, in weird unrest,
Chased across the sky in crazed behest,
And lightnings scattered their zigzag light
In wicked glee up and down the night;
The earth beneath seemed to sob and moan,
With once in a while a louder groan,
And birds and animals seemed to feel
A general dread upon them steal.
The gray wolf snappingly made reply
To the prowling panther's savage cry;
Mournfully whistled the whip-poor-will,
The screech-owl's note arose wild and shrill,
The night wind sighed with reluctant ease
Through the dark boughs of the forest trees
While e'er and anon with sullen zest
Deep thunders muttered far down the west.
Soon a tornado in frenzy broke
Like a creature of madness from Nature's yoke.
The contending elements roared and clashed,
The thunders bellowed, the lightnings flashed,
A funnel-cloud uprooted trees
With mighty force and awful ease,
And threw the wreckage far abroad
O'er hill and dale and prairie sod,
And the angry winds with clamor tore
The lodge to shreds, and, exultant, bore
Away the treasured provisions gained,

All the camp's effects, and then complained
In loud-howling fury down the vale,
Gradually dying in a wail;
And then a smothering calm came down—
Like a sluggish, dreamless sleep came down!
And the frightened braves, despoiled of strength,
Prone on the ground cast themselves at length,
To sleep away their terror and grief,
For wildmen's troubles are mostly brief.
It was the last sleep for all but one,
For from the rise till the set of sun
The sharp warcry of the fierce Pawnees
Would echo among the hills and trees,
For a warband from the farther plains
Had sworn to drink from the proud Sac's veins
The blood that made them brave and strong
And ever prompt to avenge a wrong.
Wild Pawnee outlaws, cruel they,
Proud to fight in the fiercest way.
These, sulking in ambush close at hand,
Like hungry wolves watched the little band,
Till at a command, low-spoken, brief,
From Scowling Bear, their ferocious chief,
Each Pawnee moved forward with steps as light
As the falling dew of the silent night,
Slowly, steathily, as crawls the snake,
With scarce a weed moving in his wake,
Crept each wild warrior up the glen,
Each of the Pawnees' two hundred men;
And as the stupor of restful sleep
Held the doomed Sacs within its keep,

A warwhoop round about them broke
That the very echoes of hell awoke
With the dread of its demoniac sound,
And even shuddered the pulseless ground.
In all the disorder of surprise
The terrified Sacs awoke with cries
Of inexpressible dread and rage,
And grasped their weapons and began to wage
War to the death with the surging foes
That like waves of devils fell and rose
Bearing them down with the giant weight
Of superior numbers to their fate;
Like cats with mice, in this cruel raid,
With their dazed victims the Pawnees played,
Permitting them to almost escape,
Then flaying them until they would gape
With anguish, and in the wretched throes
Of madness would hurl upon their foes,
In the fury of despair, the stones
From the rough river side, and with groans,
Shrieks and mutterings, would try to rush
Through the jeering Pawnees to the brush,
And in their bewildered, frenzied might,
Felled many a Pawnee in the fight,
Until in rage the Pawnee chief
Ordered the Sacs shot, with the belief
That in the excitement of the fray
Some beleaguered Sac would get away.
Then fell the sharp arrows like the rain
Upon unprotected heart and brain,
And the strong Sac hunters, one by one,

There's a spot in my travels where I linger and look,
A place where the grass and the rocks and a grove
Form the banks of a railroad that runs like a brook
Through a cut that is spanned by a bridge far above.

In June clothed in green, in September in gold,
Whether bloom of the springtime or in sumac's red glow,
'Tis a view, when at sunrise or in sunset unrolled,
That will live in the heart, and will blossom and grow.



THE ROCK CUT

View on the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad, near Fayette

Courtesy Upper Iowa University

Fell ere the setting of the sun.
Fiercely they had struggled all the day
Through the cruel torment of the fray.
Did any escape? Was there not one?
Ah, yes! In the Wapsipinicon,
Good stream, a warrior fell,
Just as the Pawnees' clamorous yell
Sang out the death of the hunting band
On the Wapsi's rough and bloody strand.
He swam to safety amid the rank,
Tall rushes of the opposite bank,
And sank to rest on the yielding mire,
Nursing the while a warrior's ire.
There he stayed until the shades of night
Lent their still gloom to his homeward flight;
Down the shore he crept with bated breath,
While the gaunt wolves on the scene of death
Snarled among the stark dead and tore
With hungry fangs at the flesh and gore.
At length by the lapping waterside
He saw where a small canoe was tied.
A quick thought leaped to his throbbing brain—
In this canoe, ere the night should wane,
He could with extra exerted force
Be far away on his homeward course.
And as he unloosened and stepped into
The light-tipping basketlike canoe,
He heard the warsongs of the Pawnees,
Camped up the river among the trees.
Heard! ah, with venomed hatred heard!
His soul was sick and his eyes were blurred

From scenes of massacre and blood
On the bank of good old Wapsi's flood.
He made reply with the fierce warwhoop
Of the outraged Sacs, and with a swoop
Of his tomahawk above his head,
Vowed by the ghosts of the mangled dead
Strewn through his ancestral woods, that he
And his family and tribe should be
Revenged for the life blood wantonly spilled
By the war-fiends—for the brave men killed.

The ripples danced in the pale moonlight
On the storied river, and the night,
Restful and calm as a summer's dream,
Slumbered upon the whispering stream.
Rapidly coursed the canoe along
As he plied the paddle fast and strong.
The twinkling eyes of the firmament
Their countless glittering glances lent
To cheer the brave hunter on his way
To the camp of Puckawatama.

Puckawatama, the warchief grave,
Was stalwart, hardy, determined, brave,
A warrior of experience,
Versed in the arts of quick defence,
And in the strategies of attack—
Woe to the foeman who crossed his track!
He heard the messenger's story through;
His brow grew dark, and his tribemen knew
That a dreadful vengeance he would shed

On every Pawnee's cravan head;
The medicine man forthwith he called,
And gave command to glean and scald
A large supply of the strong smart-weed
And bade his warriors prepare with speed
To give their enemies rightful scath
Mid the glories of the fierce warpath.

Five hundred warriors, tried and true,
To the warcall of their leader flew;
Armed with tomahawk, bow and spear,
Boldly they plunged into the wood-land drear,
And 'neath the forest's sheltering arch,
Though the days were hot, made a forced march,
And reached the camp of the dark Pawnees
On the second day, as the cool breeze
Of the evening began to rise
O'er the Wapsi's virgin paradise,

Quietly creeping 'round the camp
On the level greensward soft and damp,
The Sacs closed in on their enemies,
Pounced into their midst with angry cries
And soon had every Pawnee bound
Prone and struggling on the ground
By command of Puckawatama;
Now would he in sullen vengeance slay
The brutes that had killed his brave young men?
No! such slaughter was beyond his ken!
He could spare their lives and better sate
His utter vengeance and tribal hate.

The medicine man his smartweed drug
Had brought along in an earthen jug.
This drug was sprayed into the Pawnees' eyes,
Causing them horrible agonies.
When maddened with pain they were set free
To blindly roam in their misery.
The Sacs to their towns returned again,
As many as came, five hundred men.
Never again were the Sacs distressed
By Pawnee warbands from the west.

GENEROUS IOWA

O shall I tell in a line or two
"From the heart o' me to the heart o' you",
How Iowa teaches her boys and girls
Bestowing on them the richest pearls
Of knowledge? and how she teaches, the blind,
The mute and deaf? how thorough and kind
Her care of the imbecile and insane,
With vigilance never allowed to wane?
How Iowa people—they're good as gold,
God bless them—shelter the infirm and old,
The orphan babe and the helpless poor,
And the wronged who fall by the evil doer?
These facts of Iowa's noble heart
Should oft be told in the busy mart,
And oft repeated and often shown
That Iowa's good heart may be known.

THE SAWKEE PRINCESS

A LEGEND OF THE NISHNABOTNA

The gentle Wee-wa-ha-wa stood
Within the shade of an oaken wood
Beside a murmuring brook,
And long she strained her jet black eyes
Afar toward the western skies
With earnest, searching look.

She was the Sawkees' pet and pride;
Ne'er on the sunny, bright hillside
Had ran a girl so fair,
In all the nation great and wild;
She was the old chief's only child,
Princess and royal heir.

But recently beside the grave
Of Leaping Elk, the warchief brave,
Sorrowing she had knelt—
Strong Leaping Elk, her father proud,
Now slumbering in death's cold shroud—
O darkly sad she felt.

Out of the west her lover bold,
The young brave whom her father old
Had held in best regard,

Would come from war with the Pawnees,
Would come with fame not won with ease,
But fighting fierce and hard—

Come home to take name of chief,
And to assuage his people's grief
Over their old chief dead;
Come home to cheer the maiden's heart—
The pretty We-wa-ha-wa's heart—
And then the maid to wed.

Beyond the hill's receeding swell
Each noonday she looked long and well,
Far up the wartrail's way;
Three middays watching there she stood,
A golden angel in the wood,
Impatient of delay.

From o'er the hill, wild, proud and hale,
The stark war-braves swept down the trail
From out the boundless west,
And at their head the chieftain young,
The strong and stalwart We-ba-nung,
The bravest and the best.

Foremost to meet them ran the maid,
An instant then the warrior stayed
From his careering speed,
And caught her of divinest charms
And fondly bore her in his arms
Campward upon his steed.

The twain to all were much endeared;
The braves and women loudly cheered:
O hail to Wee ba-nung!
Hail to the Wee-wa-ha-wa bird!
Hail to every Sawkee's word!
O hail to old and young!

Then came the joyous wedding feast;
From north and south, from west and east
Came every proud Sawkee,
To eat, to sing, to shout and dance,
To hurl the tomahawk and lance
In gallant, sportive glee.

And neighboring chiefs of all degrees
Joined in the gay festivities—
The Pottawatamies,
Osages and the Omahas,
With retinues of braves and squaws,
All friends of the Sawkees.

Ne'er came a new chief into power
Amid the applause of brighter hour,
Nor charming princess wed
A nobler or more valliant brave,
For ne'er did plume of warrior wave
Upon a worthier head.

And never had an Indian chief
E'er rescued from the pall of grief
A maiden more sublime,

Nor ruled a stancher, braver race,
With firmer hand or better grace,
In any place or time.

E'er mindful of his tribe, and proud
That o'er their fame no evil cloud
Had e'er a shadow thrown,
It was his constant wish and will
To make their standing better still,
Better than they had known.

Chief Wee-ba-nung was a hunter strong,
Could chase the fleet elk all day long,
And close with the brown bear
In reckless clutch, and with his knife
Bring end unto the great brute's life
Within its trodden lair.

He'd meet straightway without excuse
The fiercest panther or bull moose,
And make him stand at bay,
And from his bow could send a dart,
Unerring through the roebuck's heart
A dozen rods away.

No rider held unbroken horse
More capably within its course;
The tipping, light canoe,
Rode smoothly, stanchly, when his oar
Compelled it from the grassy shore
To plow the waters through.



SUNSET ON THE SHELLROCK

View Near the Town of Shellrock. Photo by Mueller of Waverly

The sunset's glance o'er the stream's expanse, and shadows on the shore,
Add beauty e'en to a glory scene where the Shellrock eagles soar.

In battle he was brave, and wise
In time of peace. The nation's size
Grew under his control
Till villages of the Sawkees
By hundreds counted their tepees—
Proud was the great chief's soul.

He loved to see papooses play
In childish frolic wild and gay,
And much enjoyed the fun
And sporting of the larger youth
In rush-and-tumble, bold, uncouth,
And contest stoutly done.

And dignifiedly gave the prize
To lad who won in enterprise
Where patience, strength and wit,
And movement quick and cunning skill
Gave to the game a helpful thrill,
And growing muscles knit.

But while he heartened the athlete,
To wisdom's son he gave a seat
At every council fire,
And oft he spoke a moral word
That his young men in deference heard;
It bettered his empire.

Chief Wee-ba-nung no wanton war
Waged on the other nations, nor
Allowed internal strife

To waste in number his young men;
Savannah, forest, hill and glen,
Were blessed with peaceful life.

And Wee-wa-ha-wa, noble bride,
Was reverenced both far and wide
For gracious acts and true;
Farfamed the loveliest of squaws,
A queen in every way she was—
Strong with her tribe she grew.

They lived and blessed, the chief and wife,
A happy, long, domestic life,
And one by one there came
Papooses to their tented home
For shelter 'neath its rawhide dome,
To eat the hunted game.

The two lived on till ripe old age
Paid them in full the sure wage
Of time and their full years
Closed like some sweet and wildered dream,
By Nishnabotna's winding stream—
The stream their name endears.

Say not that savages eschew romance,
Or lack the thrill of Cupid's witching glance.

COURTSHIP OF VI-NO-WAZ

A LEGEND OF THE GREAT IOWA HUNTING GROUNDS

Brave and stalwart young Vi-no-waz,
Chieftain of the proud I-oh-wahs,
Stood upon a bluff of limestone—
High and beetling ledge of limestone
And looked down into the valley
Where his braves were soon to rally
For the great feast of Mondamin,
He that keepeth off the famine.

Tall and green the maize was standing,
And the rich sweet ears expanding
In the sunshine and the showers
Showed that the Ghost of Happy Hours

NOTE—Almost every tribe of American Indians has the story of some famous "squaw chief" among its traditions, and many and fanciful are the legendary adventures of these amazons; and it is said that the story of "Tus-ca-men-ta" is not only possible, but probable.

It is believed that Tus-ca-men-ta's hunting grounds were the forests and valleys along the Cedar River, mostly above the mouth of the Shell Rock. The "corn feast" of this section was something of a "harvest home" affair.

"Wap-si-vo-lun."—(Now the Little Sioux), "River of Big Fishes," so called by the Indians, on account of the fab-

Blessings breathed on every cornfield,
On Mondamin, on the corn yield!
By thousands in their husk-leaves silky
Hung the luscious maize-ears milky.

All along the laughing river,
Manitou, the Mighty Giver
Had bestoyed his riches ample,
And no foe had dared to trample
In the cornfields of Vi-no-waz,
Nor approach the stern I-oh-wahs.
With these reasons for elation,
Proud and happy was the nation.

On the morning of the morrow,
With his hatchet, bow, and arrow,
Lance and knife and knotty warclub—
His I-oh-waz magic warclub,
Made of ironwood enchanted
And by warrior spirits haunted—
Every chief and brave would revel
On the dance-ground wide and level.

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ulous quantities of sturgeon and muskellunge formerly found in its waters.

"Um-chi-mo-taws"—A detached squad of the O-jib-ways.

"Gitch-i-day-mus."—(Big Country), southern Iowa, the ancient home of the Osage Indians, and always a beautiful region.

"Ma-ko-bal."—The rich grazing lands between the Litle Sioux and Des Moines rivers, the most famous buffalo hunting grounds known to the Indians.

And while boasting of the glory
Won in battles long and gory
With their foes, the Um-chi-mo-taws,
And the brutal, wild Dah-co-tahs,
They would dance and yell around the
Harvest pole, and loudly pound the
Tom-tom, each brave fiercely painted—
Dance until the last had fainted

Then the maize-ears, sweet, enticing,
In a quantity sufficing,
Would by woman be fried, roastéd,
Boiled with game, or nicely toasted
In burnt meal; then every maiden
Of the tribe, with baskets laden,
Would pass round the well-cookt, steaming
Corn and meat, with fragrance teeming.

Then the warriors and women,
Looking proud and grand and trim in
Savage dress and plumes that fluttered
Would partake; and loudly uttered
Exclamations of rejoicing
Would set e'en the echoes voicing
Songs and praises—and Mondamin
Would be victor over famine.

This would all come on the morrow,
But out upon the plains, far, oh
Far, the piercing vision
Of Vi-no- waz made incision

Toward the westward, tow'rd the prairies,
Where the wild red rose, Mo-zai-riz,
Was encamped with Niz-ze ho-bel,
The great chief, her brother noble

Just a thought he gave the feast day,
Just a moment down the east lay
His glance, then the glad swelling
Of his heart where love was dwelling
Crowded out the thoughts of dancing
Round the harvest pole. Still glancing
From the valley to the prairies,
All of his thought was of Mo-zai-riz.

In Vi-no-waz' heart divinely
Ruled the maiden, and supinely
Lay the hours when her twinkling,
Saucy, loving eyes ceased sprinkling
O'er his soul a spray of sweetness—
For her bravery, beauty, neatness
Was this Indian maiden famous
In the land of of Gitch-i-day-mus.

Niz-zi-ho-bel her great brother,
Rescued once Vi-no-waz' mother
From the tortures of war-stake—
Cruel horrors of the war-stake—
In the land of O-wa-no-taz,
Of the infamous Da-co-tahs,

In the land of ashes-water
Where her young men met with slaughter

Tus-ca-men-ta, the great squaw chief,
Was in search of a Ponca thief
And his dark Dah-co-tah cronies,
Who had driven off her ponies,
While she hunted on the prairies—
Near the Walled Lakes of the prairies!
Far she traveled, far she sought them,
And at last she nearly caught them.

But the Ponca, O-wen-don-to,
With reinforcements turned back onto
Tus-ca-men-ta, the brave mother
Of Vi-no-waz and his brother,
Crazy Moose, the reckless rider—
Both fell fighting close beside her.
Vi-no-waz was not hurt severely,
He was knocked down, stunted merely.

Fiendishly the Ponca fought her,
Fiercely raged the ghastly slaughter,
But not until her braves lay stricken
Did her heart begin to sicken—
Still she fought and was not taken
Until all her strength was shaken
By the bloody wounds upon her—
Nushka! but she fought with honor!

Then the brutal cowards tied her
To a post—with fire tried her—
But as they began their cheering,
There came rushing and careering
Through the camp a hundred horses
Bearing Niz-zi-ho-bel's forces.
Soon Dah-co-tah braves, all ages,
Fell beneath the fierce Osages.

Vi-no-waz soon resuscitated,
Looked upon the foes he hated,
Saw the stark corpse of his brother,
Saw in camp his fettered mother,
Saw the young men, the Osages,
Coming swiftly for the wages
The Dak-co-tah reds had stolen
From the great chief Zib-a-no-lan.

Sad and weird the fruits of war! oh
How heavily lays the sorrow
E'en on savages hearts! Vi-no-waz
Wept upon the dead I-oh-wahs—
But he laughed when Niz-ze-ho-bal,
From the grasslands of Ma-ko-bal
Led his young men, fierce and hearty,
Upon the Dah-co-tah party.

"Niz-ze-ho-bel, be my brother,
Thou hast saved my noble mother,"
Was Vi-no-waz' gallant greeting
To the young chief at their meeting.

"Father's wigwam in Ma-ko-bal
Is open, come with Niz-zi-ho-bel,
Be my guest." Thus spake the chieftain—
The Osages' brave young chieftain.

To their home far to the southward—
Bright, green prairies of the southward—
Stopping not for ceremonies,
The Osages on fleet ponies
Bore the rescued brave I-oh-wahs,
Tus-ca-men-ta and Vi-no-waz—
Bore away the booty captured,
Every untamed heart enraptured.

Cyclones seldom travel faster
Down the torn track of disaster
Than coursed then those wild Osages
Down the trail worn through the ages
By the passing of the warbands—
Constant passing of the warbands—
On excursions, vengeful, gory,
Daring and depredatory.

By the sunny Wap-si-vo-lun,
By the lodge of Zib-a-no-lan,
By the wigwams of his village
Where his warriors brought their pillage,
There the valiant party halted,
Triumphant, proud, exalted,
And demanded that the nation
Give a fitting celebration.

Warsongs long and loud were chanted
Round the scalp-post stoutly planted;
The successful braves were lauded,
Tus-ca-men-ta was applauded,
And Vi-no-waz pressed to rattle
Off a speech about the battle—
Then the dog feast! Its grand nature!
Expression lacketh nomencalture!

But Vi-no-waz cared but little
For this product of the kettle,
And toward evening sought the wigwam
The imposing colored wigwam—
Of Zib-a-no-lan, the great father,
To avoid the boastful brother
Of the reckless, wild Osages,
Male and female, of all ages.

As Vi-no-waz lightly parted
The lodge door, out past him darted
Like a gleam from the elysian
Land of dreams, a happy vision,
And the vision was Mo-zai-riz,
The wild red rose of the prairies,
Zib-a-no-lan's youngest daughter—
Gracefully Vi-no-waz caught her.

With voice musical and tender,
In words that could not offend her,
The young chief spoke, captivated—
Spoke for hours, fascinated—

And his pauses, they were broken
By her timid answers, spoken
In low tones of honeyed sweetness—
Voice of pure maiden sweetness!

While the maiden listened to him,
Her coy soul began to woo him,
Though with outward actions clever
It was clearly her endeavor
To appear as only kindly—
O strange, strange love, how blindly
Leadest thou young hearts together,
Binding them with Cupid's tether!

Half a moon Vi-no-waz stayed there,
While his mother's wounds with staid care
Were healed up in good condition
By the able camp physician;
And the days were full of sunshine—
Brightest kind of lover's sunshine!—
Great with joy the days were laden
For the young chief and the maiden.

Zib-a-no-lan grandly blessed them—
With an old chief's warm heart blest them!
When they spoke to him of marriage;
Then he offered safe, free carriage
For Vi-no-waz and his mother,
Under guard of the chief's brother,
To the River of the Woodland
Tus-ca-men-ta's nation's goodland.

When the feast of wild strawberries
Had transpired, then would Mo-zai-riz
Be with pomp escorted thither,
And Niz-ze-ho-bel would be with her.
Thus the Indian lovers parted,
Son and mother homeward started—
With dispatch they made the journey
Back to their own woodlands ferny.

They were cheered with lusty pleasure
Cheered unto the fullest measure,
By the hordes of staunch I-oh-wahs—
And the hearty young Vi-no-waz
Was with warmth congratulated
When 'twas known he would be mated
With the charming maid, Mo-zai-riz
The sweet wild rose of the prairies.

While the people of his nation
Joyfully made preparation
For the feast of fruitful cornfields—
Ample and abundant cornfields—
While the corn the squaws were cooking,
He stood on the high bluff, looking
O'er the flower-waving prairies
For his coming love, Mo-zai-riz.

As he looked he fell to musing,
Through his inmost soul infusing
Bright thought-pictures of the beauty
Of Mo-zai-riz, of his duty

As a husband to the fairy
Fate permitted him to marry.
Thinking of her thus he chanted—
Scarce above a wisper chanted:

"She has eyes of hazel sweetness,
Eyes that beam with love's completeness
And the swaying of her tresses,
And her every motion blesses,
Blesses with a charmed motion,
Adding to my heart's devotion
All the pleasures of love's gladness,
All the pains of lover's madness.

"Like the sunfish in the river,
In the shallows all a-quiver,
Where the pebbles gleam and sparkle,
When no floating cloudlets darkle,
Flash her eyes, with beauty glowing,
All her lovely nature showing
In the language of her glances!—
In her soul-enriching glances!

"Her soft foot-fall's like a rabbit—
Every movement every habit,
Like a bird or harmless creature,
Lacking naught in any feature
That would win a rugged lover;
E'en the stars that shine above her
On clear nights give her the honor
To flash all their rays upon her."

O'er the prairies he descried her
Escort coming; soon beside her
Rode Vi-no-waz on a prancing
Snow-white broncho, and advancing
With her, introduced with witty,
Happy words, his young wife pretty,
And the people of his nation
Their voices raised in adulation.

And the feast to rich Mondamin,
He that wardeth off the famine,
Was spread out before the noble
Warriors of Niz-ze-ho-bel;
With the wedding feast 'twas blended
And with double joy was ended.
Long o'er the wild and brave I-oh-wahs
Ruled Mo-zai-riz and Vi-no-waz.

OUR LOVE FOR IOWA

Not for her pomp and dress when on parade,
Not for her business nor her social grade,
Her erudition, nor elite delights
Though these, like eagles, wing to far grand heights,
Do we love our proud fair Iowa the most,
But for the excellencies dear engrossed
Upon our hearts by communion with her streams,
Her woods and prairies, during childhood dreams
And plays, and romps, and explorations, strolls,
That followed the unfolding of our souls
As youth and maidenhood advanced to greet
The place in life where "brook and river meet."

PART IV

HUMAN INTEREST STORIES IN RHYME AND PIONEER VERNACULAR VERSE

Handsome souls and homely phrase
Fare together in these lays.



Des Moines Beach on Lake Okoboji

I love the roar of the surf-whipped shore, and the winds blowing wild and free,
I love the sheen of the waters green and the lake's deep mystery,
And the wooded shores, and the bird that soars, and the crowds on the wave-washed sands,
And the sylvan roads and the nice abodes, and the hill where the Egralharve stands.

BILL'S SCHOOLMA'AM:

OR, THE POWER OF LOVE'S INSPIRATION

INTRODUCTION

Bill was a diamond in the rough
Made of the proper kind of stuff,
But lacked the lustre and the sheen
That in the polished gem are seen.
Absorbed he had been heretofore
With work afield and barnyard chore;
To plow and sow, and reap and mow,
To plant things and to see them grow,
Not only grasses, corn and grain,
But garden truck, and sugar cane,
And every kind of vine and root,
And trees for shade, or looks or fruit,
To him were life and joy and pride
Above all other things beside.
The care of horses, cattle, swine,
From common grades to breeding fine,
And rural tasks of every kind,
Day in, day out, engaged his mind;
An occupation, noble, good,
And one that builds up hardihood,

And makes man a manlier man,
(Has done so since the world began),
But if the worker in the fields
Lacks culture that the schoolroom yields
Lacks mingling with his fellow men,
His lonely, plodding toil will then
Leave him without the grace he needs
When lover's cause forsooth he pleads;
Especially when Cupid's dart
Has hit him squarely in the heart
From eyes refined and smiles that twine
Round lips of learned maiden fine.

From circumstances when a lad.
Bill's early education had
Been spare indeed, and only such
As gave to him the smallest clutch
On ways polite and gentle speech,
And left them mostly out of reach.
But a new dawn upon him shone,
A morning fair, with rare ozone
Refreshing all the atmosphere,
And bringing new ambitions near
To Bill, wide opening his eyes
To scenes, as't were, in paradise;
For see! we here him amply tell
His married sister Anabel,
Who has just arrived by wheel and hoof
For a visit 'neath the old home roof,
His great love for the good and fair
School teacher who's been boarding there.

BILL'S EULOGY

Sis, the nicest gal on the girth
Of this great old whirlin' earth,
Is Miss Van Dyke!
And I jest feel manly like
When she's around—
Feel bound
To brace up and strike out,
Be somebody and rustle about!
Why! though I didn't know the work,
I run for town clerk
Jest to please her, and got elected,
Which was more than I expected.
Jim Moore
Was the clerk before,
And he could write
Nuff sight
Better'n me,
But she
Helped me with the books,
So that their gin'ral looks
Was improved quite a bit,
And Jim, he nigh had a fit.

Sis, upon my word,
She don't look stronger than a bird,
And when she came to teach our school,
One that bucked agin every rule,
And had the teachers round about
All of 'em purty well scart out,

Folks allowed
That the rantankerous crowd
Of urchins would play
Havoc with her very first day;
But she didn't have no trouble,
Though the attendance it was double.
Y'see, the news had gotten out
That her certif'cate was first class,
And they had come from far about,
But every lad and lass,
Even tough young Bud McBrewer,
First thing sorty took right to her,
And they're all a learnin' fast,
Twict as much as in the past.
Her strength lays in her heart,
And in the educatni' art
She's jest invincible,
For she knows every principle,
Got them all into her head
And knows how youngsters should be led.

When she came here to board, I said,
"Mother, I'll eat out in the shed;
I'm too rough and humly
To set at the table with so comely
A little gal as that—
I am, or I'll swaller my hat."
But the schoolma'am said she'd go,
If I kept on actin' so,
Which was the reason why,
That, by and by,

I brushed up slick and good,
Combed my ha'r as fine's I could,
And went in and set down to the table,
And did the best that I was able
To be jest right and proper,
But I blushed as red as copper,
While the blood it pricked and tingled in
my skelp,
The which I couldn't help.
But I soon forgot my fright,
She was so amiable and perlite,
And we got acquainted right away,
Thar, actually, or I'll eat hay.

Friday nights I took her home
Down the river road, by Eagle Dome,
And Monday mornin's brought her back,
With the sorrel geldin's that have paced
the track.
And can take buggy'r cutter over the road
In a 3-minute clip, with two for a load.
When other company wasn't here,
We've read and visited under the cheer
Of the hangin' lamp in the settin' room,
Night after night, in the winter time,
Till the hall clock struck the midnight
chime—
I could stay with her thar till the hour of
doom!
M ny's the things I've learnt of her,
C eople and countries near and fer;

Many of the stars I know by name,
And nigh every animal, wild and tame,
And of plants, insects, and microbes, too,
A thousand and one things I never knew,
Till she, bless her heart, came here to
board;
But Sis, old pard, I'll jest be floored
If even she can help me out
In the awful grammar you know about;
And in manners grand, and etiquette,
Things like them, I hain't got 'em yet.

Is she purty? Well, I should say!
Purty as the break of day!
Why, her hands is jest like lillies, and her
eyes,
They are pictures from the skies—
And them teeth!
You should see 'em shine beneath
Her lips, when they're slightly parted,
Jest when a smile has started
On that face that Heaven lent her
Face fashioned by some inventer
'Mong God's angels up above—
W'y Sis, 'twould make you love
Every inch of her. 'Mazin' grace!
But she has the sweetest face
Ever I see;
Hear me?
And them little feet o' hern,
Each a wee bit cute concern,

Jest as purty as her hands!
Don't see how she stands
So handy
On such dainty bits o' candy
As them feet!
Is she neat?
Bless you, yes!
And the bewitchin'est dress
That ever was, she wore
Last Sunday; you'd a swore
That she jest floated like a fay
In it, 'stead of walkin'; it's a way
She has that makes her seem
Like somethin' seen in a dream
One has had, but don't jest recollect,
'Cept the lingerin' nice effect.
Job and Moses!
She jest moves in flounces, lace and roses,
Like they was air and she a spirit—
I can't describe it nor come near it.

And grit!
Say, I haven't told you yit,
Bless her soul!
How she pulled me from the hole
Down in Wolf Creek pond last winter;
Sis, I can't begin ter
Tell in a likely way about it,
But mustn't 'tempt to pass without it.
We'd been out fer a skate,
And 'twas gittin' kindy late,

For the supper bell had rung,
And our skates jest sung
As we came around the bend
Down at the end
Of Catamount Holler, when z-z-i-p!
I made a slip,
Somehow, and like a chunk
Came down kerplunk
Whar the ice was thin,
And it broke and let us in.
I tell you t'want no joke a goin' under,
And the broken ice a punchin'
And a munchin and a crunchin'
In the water makin thunder
Round our ears!
Fears?
I had a thousand, but they was for the girl
And when we went down in the whirl,
Thinks I
She'll die
In this awful muss,
But no use to make a fuss,
And when we arose,
Soaked, chokin' and almost froze,
I jest grabbed her to my breast,
And did my level best
To help her out onto safe ice,
Which I did, soon and nice;
But the effort made me sink,
And when agin I heard the clink
Of the ice above my head,

MY GRANDSON

O were you e'er a grandpa,
And did you ever trot
Your own lad's bairn upon your knee?
If so, I tell you what!
The frolics that you had with him,
Bibbitty-bob, and so!
Wasn't it jolly good, my man,
To hear the rascal crow?

Wasn't it jolly good, my man,
To hear his baby talk?
Wasn't it jolly good, my man,
To help him learn to walk?
He reached right into your granddad heart
With his chubby baby hands,
And was the boss of the whole ranch
With babyhood demands.

O here's to my grandson! May he grow
In vision and soul and worth,
As well as in avoirdupois and height,
And may his mental girth
Be like a girdle around the world
When he is big and grown,
And may his deeds, like golden grain,
Grow tall where he has sown.

I said, Bill, this time you're dead;
But once more I riz up to the top
And managed thar to stop,
But I couldn't git no hold
Of the ice, I was so cold.
I was so numb and weak
That I couldn't hardly speak,
But I managed somehow thar
To ask the gal to make a pra'r,
For she's a prime Christian, if I do say,
And a ust to prayin'—every day;
But in the Bible she had read
That faith without works is dead,
And afore I knew what she was doin',
'Stid o' screamin' or boohooin'
As some would've done,
She took a little run,
And yanked a rail from the fence,
And with stiddy common sence,
Hooked the end that had the nail
Firmly onto my coat-tail,
Braced with her skate heels in the ice,
Pulled, and in a trice
I was out,
On my feet
Slick and neat,
Both of us enroute
Fer the house.
Soaked and drippin' from the douse.

Wish I was handsome and a scholar;
I'd give every dollar
I've got,
On the spot
If I wan't so rough,
Mainly,
And ungainly;
If I was refined enough
I could talk to Miss Van Dyke
Handy like
'Bout the angels and sich things,
'Bout fairies and their golden wings,
'Bout the moon and glowin' sunsets, and
Silver clouds and mountains grand,
And flowery dells and shady nooks,
And all the purty things that poets tell of
their books.
Stid of bein' a bashful dunce,
I'd go at once,
And in the eloquentest purty talk,
Without a balk,
I'd explain how I feel,
Bring it woe or bring it weal.

But you and me, Sis,
Didn't have the chance some has had,
For when you was a slight miss
And me a lad,
You know how father died,
And how we tried
With every kind o' shift

To help mother lift
The mortgage from the farm,
And keep the younger one's from harm,
And how the mortgage it was paid
From the money that we made,
Workin', stayin' home from school,
But makin' it the rule
That the little tads must go;
Now Dick and Joe
Are both at the varsity
Makin' up for the scarcity
Of learnin' in the family group,
And may they never have to stoop,
But keep a goin' up and up,
Till they can drink from Learnin's highest
cup.

I'm proud of them boys!
They're no toys,
But strong limbed, stiddy headed, big
hearted
Lads, and I'm glad we started
Them as we did. Mother is so proud
That she has many time's allowed
That father couldn't have done better
By 'em anyhow,
Even if he'd lived till now,
For we've carried out the letter
Of his wishes as he told 'em fore he died.
Now thar's 'nough for mother and plenty
to divide

And, Sis, I've jest a notion to
Leave the farm with Uncle Lou,
Take a little breathin' spell,
And jump into learnin'—pell mell!
Sis, tain't too late,
Is it at the age of twenty-eight?

Wish Miss Van Dyke could love me,
But she kindy feels above me,
Bein' learned and refined—
Say! Sis, it's an awful grind
To be ignorant and awkward and to know
That one's drawbacks they all show
When one gits into a crowd
Whar the people they are proud
Of their wealth, fine clothes, their handy talk,
And easy manners, without a balk.
But I'm bound
To quit a crawlin' on the ground,
So to speak,
And I'm a goin' next week
Away to school, to study up a little,
And if I can whittle
Away at books with good success,
I guess
I'll study to be a doctor, or a—preacher,
For I'm a goin' to reach her,
I vum! jest as sure as never fail,—
If I have to go through Yale.

THE HAPPY OUTCOME

Somebody in the hammock swung,
Outside the window, where it hung
Beneath the maples' dappled shade,
And every jesture that Bill made
Was seen by her, and every word
He spoke, with raptured heart she heard.
A noble little women she,
Who entered in right heartily
To William's plans to train his mind
And higher fields in life to find,
But ah! she was a pilot, too,
A wiser one than me or you.
She safely steered him past the shoals
Where wrecked have been ten thousand
souls
Who yearned to wear a cleric's gown,
Or lead the medics of the town,
Or be admitted to the bar,
Or musically pose, a star;
Professions that are over done,
Aspired to by every one,
Or thereabout, who strives to climb
Atop of learned heights sublime.
A farmer he, already skilled,
Foundation good on which to build
An education high and grand,
Much needed in this granger land.

Why spoil a farmer true and sound,
Possessing knowledge only found
In contact with the simple life,
By crowding him into the strife
Ignoble that abounds among
M. D.'s and clergy, old and young?
So Miss Van Dyke and Joe
Persuaded Bill straightway to go
To a school of agriculture that
Would put him where he should be at;
And after study, long and deep,
And scientific stunts a heap
Experiments in fields and stalls,
And four long years in learning's halls,
Some travel and experience
That you and I would call immense,
Friend William he became renowned,
The very best that could be found,
In scientfic husbandry,
Adept and capable, you see.
His services are in demand
All over our beloved land,
E'en to the islands of the sea,
As expert in agronomy,
And all its allied sciences,
And their varied appliances.

We call him now "Professor Bill,"
And cheer him with a hearty will;
He has an angel at his side—
The little schoolma'am is his bride.

HOW JOE MADE GOOD

Joe was a good-for-nothing lad,
Just a burden on his dad;
Fell down in his work at school,
Dull as Tom's gonsarned old mule;
Liked to tell bad-tastin' tales,
Smoked a lot of coffin-nails;
Swelled up chesty when he cussed,
Morals covered up with dust,
Thought he was a sporty chap,
Always struck in with his yap
When prize fights was up for talk,
Or wrastler on the walk;
And he knew the base ball score
Of a dozen leagues or more.
Billiards? Well, he held a cue
That put the old game up to you—
And of course he knew the hang
Of a mighty heap of slang;
But he was just good for nix,
And he stayed in that same fix
Till one day the "Dairy Train,"
Loaded down with corn and grain,
Apparatus in great store,
Charts and pictures, too, galore,
Dairy cows and fruits and sich,
Things to make the farmers rich,
And speakers that could talk an arm

Off plugs like me just from the farm,
Snorted into Joseph's town,
And stopped and held the sidetrack down
While the experts talked with speed
'Bout fertility and seed,
Transportation, storage cold,
Markets where the stuff is sold,
Horses, cattle, sheep and land,
Butter, cheese, supply, demand,
While the cars and depot swarmed
With guys that came to be informed.
Joe, the first chap on the ground,
Follered the professors round,
Interested from the start,
Took it in with all his heart;
Got excited 'bout milch cows,
And struck right in at once to browse
'Mong exhibits in the cars
To study the particulars;
Learned the seed corn testin' scheme,
How to feed for beef and cream
How to judge a hoss or cow,
How to harrow and to plow,
Plant and till and garner in
To get the fullest crib or bin;
Asked a heap o' questions that
For a boy seemed mighty pat,
And, gol durn 'im, wouldn't rest
From the knowledge gettin' quest
Till from them chaps from Ames he drew
Nigh about all that they knew.

Toot-toot! away skiddooed the train,
Across the snow bemantled plain!
Joe followed it with wistful look,
Till out of sight, then pulled a book
Outen his pocket—book a slim
Ames college chap had handed him.

Right there began a change in Joe,
Straightened up an inch er so,
'Lowed that he'd just calculate
To study up, investigate,
Experiment and read and learn;
Didn't seem to give a durn
Any more for sports and sich,
Dumped things like them into the ditch,
Cut his slang and coffin-nails,
And frosted them bad-tastin' tales.
A good roads expert he became,
And sensible about that same,
Ideas helpful, keen and sure
'Bout building highways to endure.
Knows when and how to plant and reap
Root crops and grain to raise a heap,
And when and what and how to spray,
Insects, worms and germs to slay;
How to drain the low wet lands,
Irrigate the desert sands,
And keep hillsides from washing out,
Put weasels, rats and hawks to rout,
Raise poultry of the winning sort,
Make every farm a health resort,

And how to put a razor edge
On ax or sickle, spade or wedge,
Make the apple trees produce
More fruit, with better flavored juice;
Fell trees, build bridges and blast rock,
And how with fish the streams to stock;
Knows how to fertilize a field,
And how to till for biggest yield—
Whether cotton, oats or rye,
Tobacco, cabbage—or, oh my—
Celery or rice or wheat,
Potatoes (Irish kind or sweet),
Alfalfa, blue grass, kaffir corn,
Clover, buckwheat—sure's you're born—
Sugar beets or Indian maize—
Any crop one wants to raise!

The seasons bow at his behest,
Silos? he can build the best,
And fill them to the very eaves
With fodder green for cows or beeves,
Sheep or swine to eat, when snows
Lie cold without, and winter blows
Its fiercest blasts across the land
But warm in stables fatly stand
The cattle from a thousand hills,
Secure from winter's blighting chills.
He knows of "conservation", too,
And how and when and what to do
To save our forests and our streams.
And go beyond our fondest dreams

In helping navigation to
Increase and put on life anew
On all the rivers, south and north,
And bring them into greater worth.
Expert at planning barns is he,
Can harness wind and electricity,
Dig wells, pull stumps, or grandly speak
At farmer's institutes a week.
Can tell us how to kill the weeds,
And what are likeliest kinds of feeds,
And how to breed up good livestock
For speed or milk or butcher's block,
And how to pick and pack and sell—
All of these things he can tell,
And a thousand other things or so
Up-to-date farmers need to know.

A man is he, clear to the bone,
And widely through the land is known,
Honored for his moral worth
And usefulness on this old earth.

This tale I tell so all may know
The good that fell to my friend Joe.

And many boys of doubtful mood,
Lazy, sporty, ruthless, rude,
Could be inspired with useful zeal
And brought determinedly to feel
A highborn purpose, a desire

To forge ahead, to climb up higher
Into the fruitful, better fields
Of human effort, where the yields
Of heart and soul and mind are fair
And full of golden harvests rare—
Could be inspired, if we could bring
Into their lives the proper thing
To kindle their ambition, and
Present to them the vision grand
Of noble prizes to be won
By each and all beneath the sun
Who strive with noble-hearted zest
To give the world their very best.

THE FARMER'S SONG

When the corn is sere and the golden ear
Is plucked in the golden haze
Of the autumn time in the sun sublime
Of Indian Summer days,
O then would I fare in the outdoor air
And breathe the rare ozone,
And enjoy the charm of life on the farm,
While reaping what I have sown.

COWBOY JACK'S STORY

AS HE TOLD IT TO THE SCOUT

INTRODUCTION

When Nebraska was wild and new,
I think it was in seventy-two,
Away out in the western part,
Far from city or village mart,
A night-worn soldier drew the rein
Near a ranchman's shack, nor stopped in vain,
For Cowboy Jack of frontier fame,
Known far and wide by his plainsman's name,
Was there to greet the stranger, and
Grasp him warmly by the hand.

The soldier rode an army nag,
So weary it could hardly drag;
He wore a captain's uniform,
A scouting dress both strong and warm;
He had encountered hostile Sioux,
Been chased by wolves an hour or two;
Had nearly perished in a gale
That thrashed the prairie like a flail
With chilling blast and rain and hail;
Had lost his way, his rations gone,

Ah, he was happy when the dawn
Scattered the wolves and showed the way
In which his trail's direction lay.
With his adventures of the night
Told like a soldier, terse and right,
He loosened the cinch of his saddle, and
Flung himself on the sun-warmed sand.

The adventures had reminded Jack
Of things that had happened some years back
To him and his. With thoughtful look
He a sweeping glance of the prairie took—
Then, after meditative stroke
Of his hand across his brow, he spoke:

JACK'S STORY

Had a fight last night with the Injuns? Well,
'Twas a savage night to be out,
And the rain was as heavy as ever fell—
Say! ain't you a gover'ment scout?

Thought so! I used to be a scout myself,
Then got into the ranging way,
And stick to it ez I make more pelf,
And am free to go or to stay.

Your speakin' of the rain, the wolves, the fight,
An' the numerous Sioux about,
Puts me in mind of jest sich a night
Some years ago and I was out.

The thunders roared and the lightnin's flashed,
And the wind blew a hurricane,
The elements rastled and tore and clashed
Ez if the night had gone insane.

I Was ridin' well armed along the range,
Mounted snug on a broncho stanch,
But I felt somew'at narvous and jest a bit strange,
For I'd lost the trail to the ranch.

The night it was cold and jet black dark,
The wolves howled along my trail
Like a hundred demons let loose on a lark;
And I felt jest a trifle pale.

To complicate things, I heard a warhoop,
A fierce yell, that echoed and broke
Like the Wild Witch's shriek up on old North Loup,
And nigh startled me out of my "yoke."

I sat still and dumb, like a chap that's scared
And didn't know what to do next,
And Spry, my broncho, jest squatted and reared
Fer she, too, was scared and perplexed.

A boom o' guns and a white man's shout,
Ez he cheered his pards to fight,
Aroused me in a jiff to turn about,
And we plunged back into the night.

The yells and the shootin' kept us in line,
And we made for it quick as we could,

I pulled my revolver and old carbine,—
They were spunky and loaded good.

We landed plunk into a hundred Sioux,
Bloody varmints, all painted and stark;
Spry jumped and I shot and we made our way thru,
Without loosin' a bit of bark.

We came to a halt in a mover's camp,
And was given a hearty cheer;
We all j'ined hands and gave the braves the cramp,
So they skuddled and left us clear.

The night and the rain went off with the Reds, for
We had fought till the gray of morn;
We was mighty glad we had closed the war,
Not feelin' a bit forlorn.

None of us was hurt, but a dozen Sioux
Had been carried away so lame
Ez to show clear 'nough 'at they'd got their dues,
And with none but 'emselves to blame.

We was shakin' hands like pard and friend,
When a scream startled us, so wild
That the hair on our heads just stood on end—
'Twas the cry of a little child!

A sneakin' Red had come up on the sly,
And had captured a little tod,
And was ridin' swift toward the northern sky—
Whizzee! how he traveled the sod!

The rest of 'em j'ined him, and off they went
A scuddin' toward Old Camp Meade,
And't seemed's though the Old Nick himself had lent
'Em especial powers o' speed.

The mother cried that little Marie
Would be burned to death at the stake,
And the father was as crazy as she,
And the boys was all in a shake.

I threw off my coat, jumped into the yoke,
And pulled my hatchet from the sack;
Afore you could wink I was goin' like smoke,
Stoutly settled on Old Spry's back.

And 'fore I knew jest what we was about
We was among them pesky reds,
And I got the child from the clutch of a lout
And broke in a half dozon heads.

Then Spry sprang about (oh, she knew the trick!
She learnt it while herdin' cows
For she was trained for the range) and right quick
We left 'em 'thout any farewell bows.

The Reds turned for us, but Spry was a goer,
And we led 'em a crazy chase,
Till after a while they gave us floor,
For we had the best of the race.

I rode into camp like a knight of old,
With beauty hung faint on my arm,

And I felt like a hero, brave and bold,
With a heart beatin' strong and warm.

The boys pulled me down soon as I said "whoa!"
The mother hugged me tight an' kist
Me jest as my mother did years ago—
In the years gone back into mist!

I cried like a child, sir, yes sir, boss,
When that mother's arm twined my neck—
It was as a life-line throw out across
The hulk of a foundered wreck.

For I had been tough in my cowboy life,
Hadn't always stuck to the right;
Had mixed up a good deal in frontier strife,
Which is seldom exactly white.

And then when the old man came for'ard and stood
Pale and tremblin' and seemin' faint,
And shook my bad hand as if I was good,
And blessed me as one would a saint—

Well, I had to surrender right there and then!
Said I: "Kind friends, I'm Cowboy Jack,
Hain't been no account since I can't tell when
And run with a dare-devil pack.

I'm known here 'bouts as a mighty tough case,
A bad one, when it comes to fight—
A fellow what's got a purty hard face
When looked at by civilized light.

But if God stays by me and helps in the chore,
I'll swear off, and brace up, right;
I'll kick my bad habits out of the door,
And fight 'em with all my might.

If the mother here, God bless her good heart!
She is surely a Christian true,
Will give me a lift with a pra'r for a start,
I'll swear to be a man, true blue."

The mother knelt on the buffalo grass,
And in accents tender and low,
Thanked God that the life of her blue-eyed lass
Had been saved, that the cruel blow

Had been warded off. Then she prayed for Jack;
Called me brave, big-hearted and good,
Asked God in his kindness to take me back—
And she told him she knew he would—

Into the walls of his wondrous fold,
Into the arms of his great love;
That my name as a convert be enrolled
On the big book there above.

This was all I heard, for objects grew dim,
And I seemed to float—float—away—
In a cold, dizzy dream, to the dark brim
Of a storm-beaten ocean bay—

To a cottage small on a hillside bare,
The picture of my boyhood home,

And I seemed to dwell for a moment there,
In the warmth of mother's room.

Then I felt no more—was like one dead—
But when I 'roused from the spell,
I found myself in a warm, cozy bed,
Feelin' weaklike, but mid lin' well.

My pard, Big Bill, was settin' by my side,
Fannin' me with his old slouch hat,
And when I "come to" I thought he'd a died
With his laughin', prancin' and that.

"Whist!" said he, "Ye fainted, old boy, yer hurt—
A gash in the back of yer head—
Wonder it hadn't laid ye in the dirt
Instid of a snug feather bed.

"The redskins gave ye an ugly slit
In yer scrap with 'em down the creek,
But as good luck has it yer right here yit,
And'll be all right in a week."

Then he went to the door and called the folks
And capered so he'd clear gone daft,
Jest started in fer stories and jokes,
And hollered, and sung and laughed.

And I thought the rest as loony as he,
When they dashed in, every one,
And the lass I saved bounced up and hugged me
And the rest did as she had done.

Yelled Bill: "Old pard, ye lit in the right nest
When ye struck that mover's camp—
See yer mammy, sister, dad and the rest,
Aint ye tickled, ye wuthless scamp?"

'Twas mother sure as your alive,
And sweet little sister, too,
That was born long after I came to strive
In the land of the savage Sioux.

'Twas dad and the boys that I helped that night
In the fight on the open plain,
And sister, dear, I saved (bless her sight)
From the fire stake's horror aud pain.

They had come out west in search of good times;
They was purty hard up back there,
But they'd all been dead as old Pap Grimes,
If't hadn't been for me'n the mare.

The folks settled down here on my old ranch,
And here we all live to-day,
Right on the old trial to Camp Commanch,
Eighty mile from there, so they say.

We're as happy as can be the whole through;
Say! it's gettin' nigh about noon,
Better picket your hoss down there in the slough,
We'll have dinner now purty soon.

There's blood on yer arm, boy! they winged ye—hey?
Dead sure! only a flesh wound, though;

Come into the house—the woman folks they
Will doctor you up so-so.

Tonight we're goin' to have a party here,
A weddin, if I my say;
'Taint often you scouts fall in with such cheer,
Say you had better stay.

It's goin' to be quit a time, you see,
For Cap'n Joe Tumms, of Fort Knapp,
Is goin, to be j'ined with little Marie—
They say he's a fine young chap.

She met him in Denver a year ago,
And they've been courtin' by mail ever since;
She's the pet of the ranch, and, don't you know,
Her goin' sort of makes me wince.

She's the sweetest angel under the sky,
And if Joe don't use her as such,
He'll have to tell me the reason why,
I'm free to predict that much.

He was here last fall with Buffalo Bill,
Then again this spring with his troop
To meet General Sherman at Baldwin's Hill
And escort him down the Loup.

But I was away both times he came;
Hadn't even seen his picture, so
Wouldn't know him from any other game
Passin', as you might say, to and fro.

From hear say he must be about your size,
And—what's that? Well! you're Cap'n Tumms!
And here comes Marie on the run! My eyes!
They're a huggin' like two old chums!

JACK'S OWN ROMANCE

After Marie had gone away
Jack was so lonesome he couldn't stay;
Leaving his father in care of the place,
He kissed his mother's dear old face,
And saddled Spry, and took his gun,
Mounted, and struck for the rising sun.

News had come from away down east—
That's what his mother said, at least—
That his old sweetheart was out of a home,
Her fortune sunk 'neath the ocean's foam.

Years ago, on a gloomy day
She had quarreled with Jack and sent him away;
Angry and jealous and almost wild,
He had gone before they were reconciled—
Gone to the west, far away to roam
O'er the desert sand and the prairie loam,
Where the fierce Cheyenne and hostile Sioux
Were the only neighbors at first he knew.

Reckless and bold Jack grew full fast—
Adventurer, scout and cattleman—last,
Though, frontiersman of solid worth

True as you'll find on this old Earth,
Man among men, a friend true blue,
Brave as a lion, through and through.
Many a time his heart had yearned
To lay the all that he had earned
Down at the feet of her who held
His heart in her hand—who in days of eld,
When he was a lad and she a lass,
Had won a love that could not pass,
Whate'er of tragedy or pain,
Or girlish pride or mad disdain,
Should hurl the cruelly poignant dart
Of lover's taunt through a loyal heart.

Now mounted on Spry, queen of the range,
Heart pounding strongly with feelings strange,
Away he rode to catch a train
Hurrying eastward to the main.
For the nearest station fast he sped,
Beating all records, so 'tis said—
At least, Big Bill brags to this day,
In his blustering, laughing, hearty way,
How Spry carried Jack on that great trip,
Good sixty miles 'thout stop or slip.

Leaving Spry in care of a friendly hand,
Jack took a train for the eastern land.
In a village on Long Island Sound,
In the old home neighborhood he found
The sweetheart of his boyhood days,
True to a love that ever stays—

Maiden still with angel grace
Showing yet in her handsome face.

My pencil falters in my hand—
Words fall short of phrases grand,
Or soft, or low, or true, or sweet
Enough to tell how lovers greet
One another when the stress
Of years apart, and bitterness,
Heartaches and awful yearning end,
And they speak again as friend to friend,
And bury the past except the part
That binds them closer heart to heart.

Jack and his old sweetheart "made up",
As the saying goes. Filled was their cup
Of joy, their happiness complete
Amid old associations sweet.
Soon forth they fared, a groom and bride,
And started on the western ride
That was their wedding tour, forsooth,
Aye happy more than if in youth
Or tender years they had been led
The matrimonial path to tread.

O WHAT IS SO WELCOME?

When approaching home in the moonless dark
O what is so welcome as Old Shep's bark?
Or light in the window, set by one so true
That when you're away she is thinking of you?

JOSH'S IDEAS OF HEAVEN

Say, Bill, I've been a thinkin' 'bout the sights in Paradise,
The jasper walls and sea of life, beyond the starry skies,
The golden streets and gates of pearl, and all sich things as them,
That we're a hopin' for tew see in the New Jerusalem.

I've been a thinkin' of the time when yew and I will be
A singin' with the glorified, thar by the crystal sea,
And shakin' hands and visitin' with friends long gone before,
And walkin' with the blessed ones along the golden shore.

Or settin' in the parlor of the house not made with hands,
Or list'nin' tew the music played by great angelic bands;
But ere we go tew that fair land the Father has prepared,
Let us thank Him for the goodly things on which we here have fared.

Let us thank him for the cattle grazin' on a thousand hills,
For meadows green, the teemin' fields, the rivers, brook and rills,
The rugged bluffs, the shady groves, and landscapes fair tew see,
All over fairy Iowa, where'er we chance tew be

Air the jasper walls more lovely than the Pictured Rocks along
The Mississippi river? If they air, then I am wrong!
And I'm wrong if golden sunrise or the sunsets I adore
Aint beautifuller than the sights thar on the golden shore.

Is the crystal sea more purty than the Okoboji lakes,
Or the angels' song more witchin' than the raptured wildbird makes,
Or the golden streets entrancin' more than the country lanes we see
Down here in good old Iowa? Now, Bill jest please tell me!

Air things more handsome, think yew, in the "land of pure delight",
Than the Cedar river country, with a river view in sight?
Or can the soul be happier in the "land of fairer day"
Than in the purty valley of the Upper Iowa?

The Devil's Backbone, eerie name, on the Maquoketa,
Is a bonnie book of nature—jest takes my eye—and say!
Don't it make yew think of heaven when yew stroll and grandly dream
Mid scenes like that, where God has walked in raptured thought supreme?

These here air jest a triflin' few of things the Lord has done
For fair and charming Iowa—the list is jest begun!
But here's enough tew bring tew mind a panarama grand,
A heaven here on earth, my friend, a more than Beulah Land.

Abidin' faith is in my heart that sometime I will see
The Master in His beauty, and that he will welcome me,
But he expects us all to know and tew appreciate
What he's a doin' for us here, down in the Hawkeye State.

And I'm a jest agoin' for tew open wide my soul
Tew all His gen'rous sunshine, and tew let His blessin's roll
On on my heart, from this time on, and use all I possess
In nat'ral gifts and wealth acquired, tew show my thankfulness.

JOSH'S QUESTIONS

Did yew ever meet yer sweetheart on the farm
house steps as she
Came out a smilin', anxious like, yet a little bashfully
And yew follered, heart a thumpin', as she sweetly
said, "Come in,"
And her mammy spoke a welcome and her daddy
shook yer fin?

Did yew ever in the darkness stop at the farmyard
gate,
Lights a blinkin' in the winders, time jest a trifle
late
And hear Old shep come snarlin' tew the fence and
rushin' threw,
Jest tew wag his tail in welcome when he found
that it was yew?

Did yew ever, unexpected, came back home tew stay
a spell,
And tew eat of mother's cookin', and tew see the
and—well!
It sort o' touched ye, didn't it, when yer mammy
said, "My boy!"
The tears a kind o' shinin' in her eyes fer very joy?

Did yew ever at the depot look around with home-
sick twang
A pickin' at yer heartstrings—no one there tew
meet ye?—bang!

A slap upon yer shoulder nearly bruk yer shoulder
blade!
Yew looked up, and it was father, come with Doll
and Sorrel Maid.

And the old man, not much at talkin', grasped yew
warmly by the hand,
So glad tew see ye he forgot the words of welcome
he had planned,
And in a ketchy voice said only, as he helped ye o'er
the wheel,
"Ma jest dotes on your home comin,' ah, how good
it makes her feel!"

Did yew ever play at forfeits at a party out o' town,
Fire crackin, in the wood stove, outside snow a com
in' down,
And yew paid yer forfeit, blushin', "pickin' cherries"
with a girl
That was so tarnal purty that she set yer heart
awhirl?

Did yew ever pass the schewlhouse jest as schewl
was out, ye know,
Take the schewlma'am in yer buggy, and then let
"Old Fanny" go,
And drive four miles while talkin' tew the best
schewlma'am on earth
Fore ye druv back tew whar she boarded? Then
yew know what life is worth.

JOSH'S
OLD OAKEN SAWBUCK

How frought with dear scenes air the days of my
childhood
When Memory's phantom brings them intew view,
The swim hole and the fish pond away down in the
wildwood.
Resortin' tew which I ne'er could eschew;
The wide-spreadin' green where we pastured Old
Brindle,
Our kind-eye old bossie, whose milk was sweet
As the thoughts that a fellow's first love letters
kindle;
But tew offset said charms was that awful old cheat,
Our old oken sawbuck, our rickety sawbuck,
Our X Y Z sawbuck, with its loose, wabbly feet.

That battle-scarred relic I hailed with displeasure
When grieved tew the heart I was called from my
play
Tew contend with the woodpile's hard high-corded
treasure,
At morning, at night, in the heat of the day,
Or when in the winter the wild-roaring blizzard
Sawed away at the air in demoniac glee,
Then I got—'tis no dream—just as mad as a lizzard,
And in angry rebillion I wanted tew flee

From that old oaken sawbuck, that rickety sawbuck
That X Y Z sawbuck; yew bet, yes-sir-ree!

I fondly remember when I was a youngster
How I loved tew go down tew the old poplar grove
And visit Dame Nature, dear heart, there amongst 'er
Wild flowers and vines and around there to rove
With chipmunks and squirrels and other wee
creatures,
Until I was called tew the woodpile again,
That bane of my childhood's else-wise happy features,
With its sawbuck that filled my young life with pain
The old oaken sawbuck, the rickety sawbuck,
The X Y Z sawbuck that made me complain.

In those boyhood days I used tew play marbles,
Gather in dragon flies and other bugs,
And whistle like skylark that joyously warbles
As its small heart into the heaven it lugs;
I used tew climb trees, and ride the grey pony,
And wade in the streamlet that flowed from the
spring,
And clamber the hillsides with Billy, my crony,
Until choretime, which ever was sure tew bring
The old oaken sawbuck, the rickety sawbuck,
The X Y Z sawbuck, which was still in the ring.

That sawbuck stands out like an awful excrescence
From the frolics and joys of my sweet boyhood days,
For right in the midst of the grand efflorescence
Of memories happy like a griffin it stays,

The "banks and braes o' bonnie Doone,"
Or in the Mountains of the Moon,
Or lakes or rapids, scenes that please,
In native land or over-seas,—
Among them all my choice would be,
The Volga! That's the place for me!
Ah, surely, I would e'er prefer
The moss grown cliff and rocky spur,
Plumed here and there with shrub and fern!
The landscape-charms at every turn—



Scene on the Volga River near Fayette
Courtesy Upper Iowa University

The splendid groves of mighty oak—
The pretty vale where glaciers broke
A path of beauty through the hills
  In ages past, and left a stream
That with delight the soul it fills
  Like loveliness of happy dream,
And brings a vision to the eyes
That makes one think of paradise,—
All in the Volga's verdant dale,
Where pretty nooks and scenes prevail

For whether I played with the boys at a neighbor's,
Or with the wee girlies coquetted a while,
I was called back, O sure, tew my onerous labors
With the dull ax and saw on that hated woodpile,
And the old oaken sawbuck, the rickety sawbuck,
The X Y Z sawbuck that filled me with guile.

Since those days of old I've toiled and I've wandered,
Been in beautiful places and some that were drear,
Have earned lots of cash and consid'able of it squandered,
Dewrin' my tame, uneventful career;
Whether in woodland or out on the prairie,
But whether up north or in warm southern clime,
In the land of the canebrake or the buffalo berry,
In a region of swamps or in lands dry as lime,
The old oaken sawbuck, the rickety sawbuck,
The X Y Z sawbuck, it was there every time.

Yes, dear tew my heart are the days of my childhood,
As they sometimes saunter around in tew view,
With their jam and preserves made of fruit from the wildwood—
And the cookies and doughnuts my infancy knew—
But my!—my!—oh my! can't I ever forget it?
The wretched old sawbuck, always out of repair,
Still in fancy appears just where I first met it,
And when in my dreams I have the nightmare,
Old oaken sawbucks, old rickety sawbucks,
Old X Y Z sawbucks loom up everywhere!

JOSH'S TRICK DONKEY

How jolly it is tew think of one's childhood,
And all the gay sports of those happy days,
In barnyard and alley, on school ground in wildwood
In all sorts of rompings and frolics and plays,
But the jolliest thing on our farm was the donkey,
Old Jack, whose ears were a foot long or more;
They could stand up as straight as a liveried flunky,
Or drop till the ends of them dragged on the floor—
Our meek-eyed old donkey, our shaggy, gray donkey
Our little pet donkey, whose bray was a roar.

I've shot fire-crackers when they proved a fizzle,
And you know what it is tew try them again
Tew see if they aint even good for a sizzle,
And they burst in your face, causing anguish and pain!
I've eaten green apples, and also gooseberries,
Sheep sorrel also, and chewed slippery elm,
But none of these things, not even choke cherries,
Could the ardor of youth so completely o'erwhelm
As a kick from that donkey, for the feet of said donkey
Could hoist a prize pumpkin clear out of the realm.

I've hunted wildcats down in Bill Tomson's timber
Swam race after race in the old swimmin' hole,

And wrestled and jumped till my joints were as limber
As a lariat or a humorist's soul;
But the liveliest times of which I remember,
And I recollect plainly, notwithstanding time flies
Were during the first frosty days in November,
When ridin' Old Jack for the mere exercise—
Old Jack our trick donkey, our somersault donkey,
A donkey that was up to most any surprise.

Old Jack he looked meek, with eyes of mild lustre,
And a calm, kindly face, like an old patriarch,
But he could wake up with a cyclonic bluster,
Take aim with his heels and demolish the mark,
And resume his composure in less than a minute,
Munching away at the oats in his box;
And in bucking and jumping no broncho was in it
With Old Jack—not at all! and the steam-hammer knocks
That came from that donkey, that little old donkey,
That hatchet-toed donkey, would pulverize rocks

Old Jack, in his day, was a strong, patient worker,
Did his full share and never was sick,
And e'er and anon when hitched up with a shirker
He e'er and anon was sure tew kick;
But his Red Letter days were those in November,
When the weather was crisp and the ground it was hard,
When of our whole family I was the member
He churned in his antics out in the barnyard;

Our stubborn old donkey, our dexterous donkey,
Sometimes he would throw me as flat as a card.

But Jack loved us all, from grandpa tew baby,
And when one was gone he would be as home-
sick
As when parted long-time from his team-mate, Old
Abie,
And would run tew meet us with movements
so quick,
Upon our return after absence protracted,
And would not go away till he got a caress!
Simple Old Jack! that's the way that he acted—
And, gents, jest the same, I am here tew confess,
I miss the affection of that humble old donkey,
Old Jack, whose ears were a foot long or—less.

THE SLEIGHMAN'S SONG

Hey O! let us go through the falling snow,
Where the downy flakes kiss the face,
And the crystals fly on the zephyrs high
In a merry, cheery race,
Till they fall on the ground without'n a sound,
But handsomely "pave the way,"
Aye making a road that will lighten the load
For our team and our staunch bobsleigh.

JOSH AND THE COUNTY FAIR

There's a tuggin' at my heart strings, Bill, when
Fair time comes around,
And I jest sorty want tew be the first man on the
ground,
And tew see the folks a comin' jest a stragglin'
fust along,
Till they thicken tew a pushin', rushin', eager happy
throng;
Then I like tew mingle with 'em as they rush from
this tew that
Tew find the things that seem to be the most worth
lookin' at,
And crowd about the things that they're most
interested in,
Or argy 'bout the trottin' hosses they expect will
win.

I like to loiter 'mong the things in Exhibition Hall—
The posies, curiosities, the trinkets, one and all;
I like tew see the fixin's that the women folks have
made,
For though I look a little rough, I dew jest like
tew wade
Threw fancy work and pretty duds, like wifie loves
tew make,

And tew see the handsome cookin', the bread, the pies and cake,
Also the appetizin' jars of pickles, jam, preserves,
And other things tew tease the taste and energize the nerves.

I like tew see the veg'tables they bring tew win the prize,
And the "Live Fair" has the very best that grows beneath the skies;
The corn and grain and grasses, and the fruit and all sich things—
Jest a wantin' for tew see 'em makes me want tew mount on wings
And fly over tew the fair ground, in the hours of early morn,
When the pumpkins are a shinin' in the rows of wavin' corn,
And the straw piles are a layin' up like heaps of burnished gold
On the farms all through the country, bespeakin' wealth untold.
I like tew see exhibits from the pupils of the schools,
The picturs, maps, and essays, and the work they do with tools.

I like tew see the pet stock, the chix, the dux and geese,
The fine hosses and slick cattle, and the sheep with heavy fleece,

The hogs and sich, adult or young, of every breed
of stock,
And tew see 'em judged, while the expert gives an
interestin' talk.

I like tew see the races, whether trot or run or
pace,
For hoss flesh is my hobby, and nothin' beats the
grace
Of thoroughbreds upon the track, a workin' for the
start,
A pickin' up their nimble feet, with elegance and art;
Now off they go, whizzee! O ho! a scootin' down
the track,
And purty soon a throwin' dirt on the home stretch
comin' back.

Machinery exhibits of every sort and kind,
Some hitched up tew power, all in a whirl and grind
And the auto cars and keerages displayed in fine
array,
Fixt up attractive lookin', jest take my eye—but say!
Jest tew change the subject, Bill, now aint it nice to
swing
On the "ocean wave," or "shoot the schutes," or
some such sort of thing,
And tew see the side shows, and the games, and
vaudeville and sich,
While rattlin' the loose change in your pockets,
feelin' rich,

Imaginin' you're young again, with Mary by your side,
When yew was coaxin' of her for tew be your winsome bride.

Say, Bill, one reason why I like the good old county fair,
There's where I first saw Nellie, with her glint of raven hair,
And her rosy lips of beauty, and her cheeks jest like a peach,
And her eyes, dark, big, luxurious, that jest most seemed tew reach
Down in my soul, and take a holt, there with a grab hook grip,
Like as if 'twas there for keeps, and never more tew slip.
Since then the fairs that we've been tew air counted by the years,
And we'll count a heap more of 'em tew, if nothin' interferes.

I like tew see the street parade of merchants' rigs and floats,
I like tew hear the cornet band and keep step with its notes;
I like tew be on hand tew greet the country school parade,
And cheer the float my deestrict sends, and treat tew lemonade

There's nought in life like a little wife,
With love in her bonnie eyes,
And love in her heart, her map and chart
Marked full of sunny skies
And quiet nooks and cheerful looks
And helpful sympathies.



MRS. HOMER P. BRANCH

Then—here's to the girl, the living pearl,
The partner of my joy!
Here's to the dame, my heart's fair flame,
The mother of our boy—
May her days be long and her life a song
Till the Master says "Ahoy!"

The teacher and the scholars tew, God bless 'em,
every one,
From this here minute right along till their days of
life are done.

A county fair, or any fair, if it is rightly run,
Is mighty educational, along with all its fun,
And I am out today a boostin' for tew git the crowd
tew go
And tew take along exhibits and tew help put up a
show
That'll be an inspiration and help tew each and all,
So that the best fair on the list will be our fair this
fall.

VILLAGE FRIENDSHIP

In a village street is the place to greet,
In the fruitful summer time,
Hearty friends of old that are good as gold,
Ringing true as the church bells' chimes,
For the smalltown folks (notwithstanding jokes)
Are the seers and the peers of all;
They remember friends above dividends
Or the lure of Fortune's call.

FARMER JONES AND THE COUNTRY EDITOR

Wife and me—her name is Sarah—
We live jest out on North Pa-rairie,
On the purtiest quarter section
That ever showed a green complexion
When the skies of June was open
And the winds of spring was lopin'
Over medder, glebe and field,
Prophesyin' of the yield
Soon tew come in plenitude
Of succulent and gracious food;
On the purtiest lay of land
That ever showed a golden stand
Of grain jest ripe and fit for cuttin'—
That farm, sir, it jest takes the mutton.

We lived there fur twenty year,
It was that or mighty near,
Afore we paid any 'tention
That is suitable fur mention
'Bout takin' of the hum newspaper;
I say, sir, 'twant the proper caper,
But many folks dew jest the same,
Borrowin' papers is their game;

No boosters, they, by the eternal!
Them that borrows the local journal—
I see it now plain as a mountain,
And it goes without the countin'.

Wife and me we started small,
We didn't have nothin' at all,
When we j'ned hands, so we fell tew skimpin',
And got along kindy lame and limpin',
And kindy got intew the habit
When we could git a thing tew grab it,
Until by savin' and by schemin'
We fetched tewgether a beseemin'
Comf'table little livin',
Always gettin', never givin',
'Cept tew send our boys tew college
Fur tew brush 'em up in knowledge,
And our gal, Almeda (bless 'er heart),
She was expensive from the start;
But that don't count, we must allow,
Fur they was ours anyhow.

We bought more land from time tew time,
And I was feelin' peert, sublime,
And one day in divine September
I thought I'd like tew be a member
Of the board of county dads, sir.
And thought the office could be had, sir,
Fur I felt jest a little weighty
As I'd jest bought another eighty.

I didn't like the way things run,
Thought they could be better done,
Thought things looked somewhat alarmin'
Fur poor fellers that was farmin',
Fur the taxes they was high,
And the board did't seem to try
Tew reduce 'em much of any.
Well, I thought I'd be one tew many
Fur the trickin' country ring,
So I took a little swing
Out among the politicians
Airin' of my new ambitions.
Without a though of circumvention
I 'nounced myself fer the convention,
And in the paper I expected
Tew see my good p'ints all reflected
In a editorial lengthy,
Praisin' of me full and strengthy;
But, by gum it made me mad
Tew see what you dumb paper had:
It jest said that "Jones the miser
He wants tew run fur supervisor."

I jumped in tew my one horse wagon,
And yew bet, there was no laggin'
On the road. We went a pumpin'
I kept the old mare a jumpin',
And drove right to the printer's place,
Swearin' that I would punch his face.

There set the editor a writin'—
U-g m! it jest made me feel like fightin'!

And says I: "Yew rank old carkas,
Yew scalawag, you bleatin' Barkis,
What do yew mean by this here item?
Yew don't know beans, not when ye sight 'em".

He didn't act as I expected,
He jest looked cool, calm, and collected,
And asked me perlitely tew be seated,
Jest as if that I had greeted
Him with good day, or howdydew, sir,
Instid of actin' like a bruiser.

But jest then in bounced a happy
Bright young woman, who asked the chappy
In the sweetest elocution
Fur a little contribution
Fur a poor family in distress;
I thought of five cents, that or less,
But, by Goliah's big brass collar,
That chap he handed out a dollar!
More'n I had gi'n in all my life,
Fact, sir, twas more'n me and wife
Had both together gi'n the needy,
We had been so tarnal greedy;
I felt as small as new pertaters,
Or little runty green termaters.

Then came my neighbors, Smith and Johnson
And my nephew, Billy Bronson,
Tew pay up their subscription,
And they most had a conniption

Tellin' how they liked the journal,
Sayin' it was jest supernal,
Full of news, right tew the pi'nt,
Complete and seldom out of ji'nt

An old man, kind faced and grey headed,
Whose winsome darter had jest been wedded,
Called and thanked that Mr. Printer,—
Well, sir, fact, sir, I can't begin ter
Tell how nice that old man talked
As around the floor he walked,
Thankin' the scribbler good and fittin'
Fur the fine piece that he had written.

Well, then a man came in with copy
Fur an advertisement big and whoppy—
Said he wanted half a page,
And wanted said space tew engage
Fur six months, and mebby more,
Fur his double-breasted store;
And he said he laid his risin'
In the world tew advertisin'—
Said he couldn't thrive without it,
And that was all there was about it.

Then in rushed a flock of childr'n,
Noisy, jolly and bewild'r'n',
With a big bouquet of roses,
Smellin' it with their little noses,
And after the editor had 'risen
To greet 'em, they told him it was his'n;

He said a kiss must be the pay,
And they run laughin'ly away.

Then he turned tew talk tew me,
But in walked a commit-tee,
Of merchants, bankers, money loaners,
Laborin' fellers and property owners,
Tew git the editor tew agree
Tew dew a little puffin' (free)
'Bout a new factory tew be started;
And he j'ined in with a good hearted
Ready will that was elatin'.
And they went on without abatin',
Talkin' up the shapes and sizes
Of all sorts of enterprises,
And all j'ined in the same conclusion
That advertisin' was no delusion;
That the paper had helped the town,
All around and up and down.
They talked there fur half an hour
'Bout the the newspaper and the power
Of good that it was always doin',
Sayin' that utter blank and ruin,
Beyond all hopes fur tew repair,
Would befall if it wan't there.

Next tew come in was a good lookin'
Sweet-faced woman, with a book in
Her hand—it was a Bible—
A little red-bound, thumb-worn Bible!

She opened tew a blank leaf fair,
With childish comments written there.
He read, and tears came in his eyes, sir:
"I love this book, it makes me wiser,
I also love our local paper
May be better", signed "Lilly Draper".
Since writin' that the child had died,
Had gone over on the other side.
Of the earthly ties now broken,
The Editor had kindly spoken
In the warmest hearted words, sir,
That anybody ever heard, sir,
And of her winsome girlhood graces,
And of the love that interlaces
Earthly hearts with those up yonder
As a love e'er growin' fonder.
He looked noble as a brother
As he passed the book back to the mother.
"Keep it for the kind words you said,
And may God's peace rest on your head",
The mother said in a way so tender—
Well, sir, I felt fur my suspender,
And tried to keep my eyes from blinkin',
Fur it got me into thinkin'
Of the one we laid away
On a sad and crushin' day
Back when me and wife was younger;
Yes, sir, I had felt the hunger
Of a heart starved by the partin'
With a little un, and I felt like startin'
And a runnin' crazed and wild,

When thoughts came back of that dear child,
And this editor I hated
Fur the words that he had stated
'Bout me bein' of a miser
And a wantin' tew run fur supervisor,
This same man he wrote a notice,
'Bout our little dead flower, Lotus.
A kinder notice, one couldn't ask it,
Of how she looked when in the casket,
Like a sleepin' fay or a pearl settin',
And how the angels was a lettin'
Of her soul into the glories
Told tew us in Bible stories.
Such lovely words, how could he write 'em?
We cut 'em out and saved the item,
But never thanked the writer for it,
And now I'd come in fur tew war it
With the editor fur sayin'
(In a way that looked like playin')
Less a'gin me than for 'er,
And it struck me as might a horror
On a dark and grewsome night
How perhaps that he was right
In callin' of me a miser,
Fur I begun to look that size, sir,
When in a view of retrospection
I beheld my own complection.

Well, I began to feel uneasy.
And, tew, I was jest a little wheezy

With my asthma. The air was scant
And it fairly made me pant
In that office. So I stepped outside,
Failin' right out fur tew decide
Tew give the editor his thrashin',
Tho' I'd struck in so fierce and dashin'.
Mebby 'twant the air but me, sir,
But twas hotter'n bilin' grease, sir,
In that office. I was embarrassed,
And my feelin's they was harassed
By the snick'r'n of the typesetters;
They was aiders and abettors
To my chokin' up in there;
Seemed's though they was aware
Just how small and mean I felt
At the way that I had dealt.

Well, there was no use of naggin',
So I jumped into my wagon
And drove home and said to Sarah:
"Fur twenty year we haint took nary
A one of our county papers—
We're as stingy as two scrapers!
Wife hadn't yew better step in,
When yew are down tew town ag'in,
And subscribe and stop our borrowin',
Fur it's gittin' mighty harrowin',
Bein' able fur tew take it,
But a havin' fur tew rake it
Up among the neighbors. Curious
How we've been so dumb penurious."

Wife and we talked it over
Clean from Limerick tew Dover,
Talked out and in and talked it clear,
How that we'd been so mighty queer
In bein' so close in all our dealin's,
Regardless of other people's feelin's.

We changed our course right there and then
And the childr'n said "Amen!"
Fur they know our reputation
Fur bein' stingy's all creation.

Since then we've done a heap of good,
Givin', whenever that we could,
Donations to the worthy poor,
And helpin' every righteous doer,
As needed help, when we was able,
And we invited to our table
Neighbors that we long had slighted,
And many's the wrong that we have righted;
Folks quit callin' of me a miser,
And now I'm County Supervisor,
And the editor he's our frien' sir,
He is one of the best of men, sir,
When you come tew know him well,
Though at his work, goin' pell mell,
Hewin' right straight close tew the line,
He is apt to make yew whine
When a big chip of truthful blame
Flies and hits yew where yew're lame.

Like others he may have his failin's,
But don't yew try to give him whailin's;
If yew want to win him over,
Turn him loose into the clover
Of your good and kindly graces
And yew will taste him in the places
Where he is jest as sweet and meller,
Fact, sir, as any other feller.

FARMER JONES ON SPRING POETS

These here poets that awaken
Only when their wits are shaken
By fine changes in the weather,
They ain't wuth a bluejay's feather;
For with all their fancy ravin'
'Bout the springtime's good behavin',
'Bout the glory of the roses
And the other early posies,
'Bout the lovesick lovers roamin'
In the moonlight and the gloamin'—
And all sichlike gush and feelin',
Meant tew be extra appealin'—
They don't touch ye—only try tew;
They are not the bards tew tie tew!

Give tew me a poet songster
Whose big, honest heart belongs ter
All the seasons, dry or rainy,
And I want him sound and brainy.

Poets they ain't wuth a splinter
If they can't sing of the winter,
And the autumn and the summer,
And that poet, he's a hummer
Who can take a day that's dreary,
Tone it up and make it cheery,
Throw a dash o' fun and laughter
Intew it and the day after!
Jest considers it a duty
Drawin' of the grace and beauty
From the storm and cloudy weather,
Cold snap, anything or whether
Roses bloom or snow is blowin',
Always cheerful, always crowin'.

If a bard refines my daughter
Jest as reg'lar poets ought ter;
If a bard can be a mentor
Tew my hired man or renter,
Coax my boys tew love their mother,
Daddy, sister, and each other;
Make us with our lot contented
'Stid o' drivin' us demented;
Give us all an inspiration,
Here and over all the nation;
Lift us up with splendid teachin',
Deep and wide, yes, and far-reachin',
Knows a good thing when he sees it,
Melts the heart and then don't freeze it—
He's the poet whose spring writin'
I can read and take delight in.

FARMER JONES
ON
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Darter Lize and my son Richter
They gin ter me a birthday picter;
Twant of cherubs with wings a flyin',
Nur of the summer flowers dyin',
Nur lovers in the orchard mopin';
Nur Injins threw the timber gropin';
Twant of the sunset soft and meller,
Painted in red and blew and yeller;
Twant of hosses, sheep nur cattle,
Twant a shipwreck nur a battle,
Nur loves, nur doves, nur none sich kinkles,
But twas a face all full of wrinkles.

I've never seen a face so humly,
Yet it looks sedate aud comely;
And it looks manly, somethin' tew it
Of good tew dew and grit tew dew it—
A look of wholesouled good behavior,
A tender look, like tew the Savior,
In the sad lustre and the beauty
Of his eyes, as if a duty
Toward his feller men had called him
That nerved his heart and yet appalled him;

Looks that at first are full of myst'ry,
But when we read our nation's hist'ry
It's easy nuff tew find the man,
Of all of 'em the manliest man.

Born a backwoods pioneer,
Little in his life to cheer,
Yet the heavens poured their light
Intew his soul, until his sight
Was keen and clear,—and his heart
Was strong and honest from the start.

Born with poverty tew tussle,
From boyhood up he had tew rustle
For his livin' and his learnin'
All the time his big soul yearnin'
For a life of larger uses,
Where he could lesson the abuses
Of that dark and awful season
When the nation lost its reason.

Al'as goin', never stoppin',
He was good at splittin', choppin',
Plowin', plantin', reapin', thrashin',
And though he wan't so mighty dashin',
And didn't make so fine a clearance
In the matter of appearance
As did them with smoother graces,
Or as had more handsome faces,
Yet his learnin' was immense,
Both in law and common sense.

And in politics and sich
He had knowledge that was rich,
While of ordinary lore
He had a never ending store!
Could talk like a scowlin' fury—
Er an angel—to a jury;
And showed he wasn't hitched up tugless
In them speeches with Steve Douglas.

When for president elected
He acted jest as I expected,
Riz with majesty and power
Tew meet the needs of that dark hour
When states broke out intew rebellion,
And whether patriot or hellion
Came before him, he was ready,
Strong of heart, resourceful, steady,
Sometimes towerin' fierce, defiant,
Like a mighty mental giant,
Sometimes tender as a woman,
Always soulful, kind and human,
And amidst the big war's rigors
Writ the words that freed the niggers,
Brought a land torn by dissension
Intew ties of closer tension,
Cemented intew bonds that hold us
A people great, and forms that mold us
Intew a fellowship whose glory
Will ever live in song and story;
And our country thus united,
Them monster wrongs forever righted,

Is drawn about that great man's heart
In loyal bonds that ne'er will part,
The stronger that a traitor hand,
Just as peace dawned on our land,
In frenzy took the biggest life, sir,
That ever weathered any strife, sir.

Glad the childr'n thought tew give it—
Yes, sir, yew have struck the rivet;
I ain't so jumpin' mighty swift,
But I somehow show my drift,—
TWUZ THE PICTER OF ABE LINCOLN!
And sir, I am jest a thinkin'
That no man in this hull nation,
No sir, nur in all creation,
Come before nur comin' arter,
Is half so high as Abe the Martyr
In the gen'ral estimation.

THE BABE AT PLAY

To the parent there is nothing so poetically sweet
As the pat-a-pat-patter of the baby's little feet,
Without it is his tiny laugh or merry prattle-cackle
As he rolls about the floor or plays amid his tackle.

JOSH AND CITY LIFE

They may talk about the glory of the Garden of the Gods,
Or the beauty of the valley whar the Rose of Sharon nods,
Or the high and mighty Andes, or the sweepin' Amazon,
Or any freak of natur' that the sun e'er shown upon,
But fer me, the thrillin' brilliance of electric lighted streets,
And the tall and stately structures whar the hum of traffic greets
The soul of tense ambition, and puts cheer intew the heart
Of the man that loves the thrillin' rush in office, store or mart!
Fer me, the clatter of the cars, the locomotive's scream,
The hum and din of traffic, people passin' in a stream,
And all the charm of commerce, fashion's pomp and gleam and flash,
And the ginger of good business, with its thrill and pep and dash,
And the automobiles comin' and a goin', also, tew,
And all the world a seemin' fer tew want tew dare and dew.

PART V

BOYHOOD RHYMES

AND

SCHOOL DAY JINGLES

Good old days, when we were young!

Only sweet songs then were sung.

SHE FLITTED PAST

She flitted past! Her golden hair
Floated above a face as fair
As e'er was looked upon—
I never thought sun could arise
On such sweet lips and such blue eyes,
But hold! for she is gone!

Thus come our joys, as fleet they go,
Again we're face to face with woe;
But cheer thy heart, old boy!
There's always beauty flitting by,
With pretty lips and laughing eye,
A world of love and joy.

Enjoy the beauty that goes past,
Don't look for happy scenes to last,
They'd spoil us bye and bye;
If all the world were bright and gay,
And if we always had our way,
We'd sigh for tragedy.

LOVE IS A FLOWER

Love is a sweet and radiant flower
That holds our senses for many an hour
Enthralled within its bewitching power.

A LOVER'S TRIBUTE

Thy flaxen tresses bewitchingly move
As if stirred by the touch of angels, Love,
In this winter breeze,
And the laughing glance of thy sweet blue eyes
Is like a beam from the sunniest skies.

A beauteous form, such as many deem
Can only exist in a poet's dream,
Is thine, and the ease
And the grace of thy every motion
Demand and receive a rapt devotion.

The bracing ozone of the frosty air,
The softened gleam of the ice's cold glare,
The stately brown trees,
The spirited chime of our ringing skates,
All speak of thee with the praise of the Fates.

Thy dainty-gloved fingers, now in my hand,
Thrill me like the touch of a Fairy's wand,—
O thou art divine!
A soul as pure as the cherubim speaks
In the living pink of thy seraph cheeks.

Thy beauty is painted within my heart,
A painting superior to art;
There let it shine
In a fondling light like the moon's soft glow,
To stay there fore'er as through life we go.

A SUMMER IDYL

Dipping, dipping, dipping,
As we lightly row,
Gaily through the water lipping
Goes our boat like fairy tripping.

Floating, floating, floating,
Out upon the stream,
Go we, drift we, at our boating,
Half a dozen pleasures noting.

Musing, musing, musing,
Sit we restfully,
While our drowsy boat is cruising
Listlessly without our choosing.

Sighing, sighing, sighing,
Talking carelessly,
Loving looks our words belying,
Cupid blindly o'er us flying.

Dreaming, dreaming, dreaming,
Are sweetheart and I,
While the sunlit skies are beaming
On our love with joyous seeming.

ONLY THY FACE

Yes, ———, thou art beautiful—that is, thy face is,
But thou art sadly lacking in all other graces.

THINE EYES

Sweetest reveries and trances
Through my happy senses roll
As I dwell within the glances
Of thine eyes,
And the light of love advances,
And shines full upon my soul,
While a thousand pleasant fancies
Fall and rise.

Ah the golden light embraces,
With a passionate delight,
All the scintillating graces
Of thine eyes,
And their beauty interlaces
With strange visions, glad and bright,
Of seraphim winging races
In the skies.

THE SELFISH SEER

Did you ever hear of the selfish seer
(Ah, one to be most roundly hated!)
Who won't do kindly deeds for fear
He will not be appreciated?



A WOODLAWN VISION

Pasture Scene on the Cedar River near Janesville. Photo by Mueller of Waverly

The Junetide goal of my musing soul is a woodlawn pasture fair,
And the gentle kine, those friends of mine, are grazing in beauty there.

A LOVER'S CONFESSION

In thy hammock 'neath the shady elms, love,
I saw thee lying, lulled to slumber still
By fondling breeze and warm caress of Spring,
Thy golden tresses coyly trembling down along
Thy gently heaving bosom, as they sought,
Or seemed to seek, to nestle near thy heart.

Thy maiden form, in rounded elegance
And graceful outlines, molded in relief
From flowing dress of fashion beautiful,
Is stamped forever on my heart of hearts;
Thy gown of snowy whiteness, laces, aye
And ribbons, all combined to beautify
The shapeliness that more bewitching was
That in thy sleep no arts of coquetry,
No posing purposeful, were used to bring
About the lovely picture thus revealed.
Thy white attire floating languidly
Upon the perfect contourage of thy
Rare, shapely figure, would have surely caused
The proudest spirit from Elisium
To vanish in a cloud of jealousy.

A goddess fair indeed thou looked that time,
As dappled sunbeams, smiling, struggled through
The leaf-embowered shadow-realm of thy
Green canopy to mingle there astir
Amid thy graces; and thy dimpled cheeks

Were radiant with smiles, there as thou slept,—
Rare smiles, so sweet and kind, they seemed to pour
A gentle halo round thy head, and were
Thy soul's reflection, or its photograph.

There by thy side a moment then I stood,
Awed to enraptured silence, drinking in
With thirsty eye the draught of loveliness
Presented, and I did not dare to move
For fear that I should break the magic of
Thy dreams; but, bolder growing, and almost
Without the reckoning, I stooped and stole
The joy of one fond kiss from thy sweet lips—
Then quickly went into the shadow of
The trees, and watched thee from their friendly
depths,
And passed the hour in pleasant reverie
Till thou awoke, then came forthwith to claim
The promenade thou promised yesterday.

PICNIC JOY

When we are out picnickin',
'Tis joy to hear
The right good cheer
Of knives and forks a clickin'
'Mongst pies and cakes and chicken.

THE OLD OAK TREE

In the pasture the sheep-bells are tinkling,
In the heavens the bright stars are twinkling,
And o'er the grasses the night dew is sprinkling
A moisture that makes us seek
Shelter 'neath this old crumpled oak
We have oft lingered under before.
If this old tree could speak
From the heart of its kindly leaf-cloak,
What a store of excellent lore
It could publish! Ten thousand folio pages
Couldn't hold the "love talk" it has heard thru the ages;
Even ours, Miss ——, I brook,
Would make a remarkable book.

PINK ROSES

O the woodland is balmy and shady,
And awake with the singing of birds,
As I stroll down the pathway with Sadie
And list to her beautiful words.

We are after a basket of posies—
That is, she is, and I came along;
But the flowers I like are the roses
That bloom on her cheeks. Am I wrong?

THE LOVER'S FAREWELL

The moonbeams, wan and pale,
Are flowing o'er the vale—
How sad and lonesome is the spectral night!
And you say that I must leave you, dear—
Leave you for awhile, perhaps fore'er.
I will; but though my wretched heart may blight,
And wither up in hate
Of all things I now love or ev'n esteem,
Although a haggard fate
May pierce my soul with its gaunt, chilling beam,
Forever unrelenting,
Yet through the gloom of sorrow-laden years,
My thought, still unresenting
Shall kindly turn to you. These tender tears
You shed in my behalf at parting,
As I shall see them in my dreams, starting
From the eyes of every lovely vision,
Will wrap my heart about with sympathies,
And the demon-finger keen of cold derision
Pointing e'er and unforgetting at these ties
Now severed, will melt and vanish for a time
In love's emotion, warm from Memory's clime.

You beg me go!—forget this shrine,
Or but remember it as Friendship's bower!
Farewell, sweet love! I leave you, but devine
You shall seen to me through every hour.

"SNOWED IN"

To see the cavorting
Of the "beautiful snow",
And to hear the snorting
Of old Boreas, jo,
As he sweeps to and fro;
And to be on the road
With the trains all too late for any connection;
To sit, glum as a toad,
At stations lonely, with nothing but reflection
For company, and that of the very worst kind,
Is an inglorious state of things, don't you mind?

But I'm bound to get through
If it takes a fortnight,
And I'll not say adieu
To the west—by my sight!—
Till I see a cute wight!
Miss ——, 'tis "thee" I'll see.
In your presence there's no such thing as dejection;
I'm always full of glee
When with you whatever the weather's complexion;
But this slow-poke way of getting along's enough,
By Jove! to make a fellow feel terribly tough.

GLORIES NOW IN VIEW

The glories of the past are crude and primal to
The glories now around us—glories now in view.

TO A TEAR

Ah, thou emblem of grief,
Sign of holy devotion,
Sign of heart's tenderness,
And of the soul's emotion,
O fall not for me!

One drop! yet greater far
Than the grandest of ocean
Billows is the deep grief-swell
Of thy tremulous motion
When dropt from the e'e.

Thy glist'ning lustres, as thou
Dwell'st a-tremble on the cheek
Of unspeakable sorrow,
More touching are than words—speak
Wilder of unrest.

One drop! but richest of gems,
Of wealth too truly unknown,
Art thou, a priceless treasure,
The soul of a pleasure flown
From a hapless breast.

THE HEARTS OF MEN ARE BRAVER

The hearts of men are braver, in this day,
Than in the knightly age of frequent armed affray.

THE KNOCKER

Bury the "knocker" out in the woods, in a great
big hole in the ground,
Where the bumblebee bumbles and the woodpecker
pecks and the straddlebug straddles around;
No use for the "knocker", you can't get him to
boost,
He's too impractical, stingy or dead,
So bundle him off to the bumblebee's roost
And bury him heels and head,
And cover him over with a great big stone,
Then hurry away and leave him alone
And let him hammer and pound and knock
Till the judgment day on that great big rock.

THE WHISPERERS

Like the lull of far off music
Are Josie's whispers low,
And dulcet sounds come from her lips,
And charming accents flow.

But Hattie's rasping whispers, my!
They grind out through her teeth,
Like pigs that scratch against the fence
Then squeeze through underneath,

TO A FRIEND

I wish;
That happiness may ever be thy lot,
That life's pathway may seem to thee a bright
And blossoming meander of delight;
That thou mayest ne'er do aught to cloud thy name,
That thou mayest ne'er be victim of a plot
Or snare; nor be the heir to stain or blot
Upon thy fair and estimable fame;
That thousands may applaud thee and esteem
The pure rays of nobleness that beam
So brightly from thy eye through fleeting time,
And making thee as man and friend sublime;
That thou mayest love all that love thee truly—hand
In hand, as 'twere, walk with them down life's winding shore,
Through vale and shady wood, and o'er the sunny sand,
Or where the songbirds charm, or where the vultures soar.

ON THE SQUARE

If I'm as square as four-by-four,
What's the use of asking more?



"LOVERS LANE" Photo by Mueller of Waverly

Beautiful Sylvan Scene on the "River Road," near Waverly

On nice summer daysin courtin' time
The maids and swains think this spot sublime.

PHANTASMA INFERNO

Down a hot and dingy valley
  Turbulantly flows a river,
On whose banks there frantically
  Roaming, wofully aquiver,
Lingers a tumultuous band
E'er treading up and down the strand—
A restless, wild-eyed, glaring gang,
Shrieking in concert evermore
Accompaniments to the clang
  Of waves that beat against the shore;—
And pitifully moan and wail
And tell a crazed and mumbled tale
  Of the pains, the pangs, and the vast
  Torments they endure, while aghast
They swelter in the scorching gale.

Phantoms they! the stygian souls
  Of mortals ambitious who died
  The slaves of vanity and pride—
Souls more infernal than the ghouls
That feed with greediness dread
On the corses of the dead—
Souls of mortal hypocrites who
When on earth made much ado
Of righteousness and virtue, stood
As perfect models of the good,
Prayed long and loud in public place
With upturned eye and beaming face;

But beneath which, low-seething, lay
A life of vice that bursted forth
In foul and odious array
At last and fiercely swept away
Their every vestiment of worth.
Their character, by mean deceit,
Though maudlin, vicious, mean and low,
Upheld so as to seem replete
With actions bright with holy glow,
Came forth at last so that the world
Could see their vicious lives unfurled
And shudder as their souls were hurled
Down at the demon's feet.

Remorse eternal is their doom,
Their dwelling place the morbid gloom
That spreads its heated vapors o'er
Dark Hades everlasting roar.
They sob and shriek and madly sigh,
And linger 'neath that canopy,
The sullen dread-cloud of distress,
And rave in wild unhappiness;
They linger there upon the strand
And watch the stream's hot eddies whirl
Into many a vortex-curl
While their parched mouths and tongues expand,
And torturously crack and dry
In burning fever, and their hands
They wring in frenzy, and they cry,
And cringe, and fiercely tramp the sands.

THE NIGHTMARE

I lay me down in morbid sleep,
While the spirits of the night,
Out upon their somber flight,
Their silent, gloomy watches keep.

I pass into a murky mist,
And without power to resist
Float on through dismal routs,
Now having fears and doubts.

I am afflicated with a freezing dread,
And heaviness seems resting o'er my head.
A stifling universal cyclone flings
Abroad a craze of ugly, unlike things.

Down a steep hill I am impelled,
And from destruction am withheld
By the same power that with sullen force
Hurries me onward in my course.

The ground which I traversed is split
With yawning gulfs, and as I flit,
And leap and dodge along, I see
Wild eyes peer upward at me furtively,
Wistfully and fiercefully from these dark holes.
Which seem to be a hell of wretched souls.

Mighty clouds and a soaring sound
Rush in upon the dull profound.

I stand upon the heated rim
Of a lake of lashing fire,
Where loathsome reptiles, living, swim,
With hideous writhings dire.

White skeletons are dancing in
The air and rattling their loose bones
In fierce, fantastic glee, the din
Made more horrible by the moans
Of myriads of ghastly shapes
That rise and fall upon the gale,
Struggling to catch a monster, pale,
That constantly their grasp escapes,
And seem fore'er to flee
Toward a fast receeding sea,

The dizzy earth is rent asunder
By a blast of deafening thunder,
And numbed by cold paralysis
I'm hurled into a dark abyss,
Where I seem to float for years
In somnolent atmospheres.

A hideous beast, with broad-flapping wings
And voice that with satanic fury rings,
Grasps me within his black, repulsive arms,
And fills my confused soul with weird alarms.
The beast now roars that he doth devour
All things that come within his power.
His ugly, mighty jaws expand,
My face by his foul breath is fanned,

And sharp as daggers drawn from sheath
Gleam his great and swordlike teeth.
Wildly I look abroad
And gasp a prayer to God.

A silver light breaks in upon the scene,
The monster in bewildered rage grows green,
Now pale, now vanishes, entire,
In a flame of consuming fire.

All terror ceases now,
I feel upon my brow
The kiss of a cool breeze;
I rub my eyes, and sneeze,
And yawn, and stretch, and look around,
And nothing see here to confound.

I guess from present looks
I've been among the spooks
In the Land of Nod, for sure as sight,
Tis morning! I've been dreaming over night!

THE BACHELOR'S DELIGHT

Of all the boons that Providence e'er deigned to bless
Us with, none to the stricken bachelor e'er seems
So great as a coy maiden's sweetly spoken "yes,"—
It fills his erst blank soul with glorious dreams.

SERAPHINE VISITORS

Silently on wings of ether
In my dreams there come to me
Visions of unearthly beauty
That caress me lovingly;
And they float, these lovely shadows,
O'er my curtained couch all night,
Each dispensing sweet enchantment,
Joy benign and calm delight.

Vestures of transparent whiteness
Wave about their lustral forms,
Glist'ning softly in the moonbeams,
Kissed by airs in tender storms;
And their silver-gleaming tresses,
As they move in silent flight,
Mildly light the darkness round them,
Lending beauty to the night.

They're the spirits of the loved ones
Who have passed to homes divine,
In the second life's Great Kingdom.
Within Heaven's borderline;
But at night in bands all joyous
Flock they to the mortal one
Whom of all earth they loved the most,
Whom of earth now love alone.

Bright they come on Beulah's odors,
Floating on the breath of low,
Sweet music, mild, melodious,
And their Fairy faces glow—
Glow with happiest expression!—
As they hover o'er my bed,
And their lips in kisses touch me
As they nestle round my head.

ODE TO A COYOTE

Oh, thou glum old gaunt coyote,
With quiet eyes, so meek, devout,
Thy reticent, coy ways, denote
The quaint suavity of a lout,
As on the twilight thou dost gloat!
Oh, how I long to wipe thee out!—
To take thy weird and meagre form
And hurl it 'gainst the coming storm!

Sour thou art and melancholly,
Yelping a cross 'twixt howl and sneer,
Looking measley, yea, and drolly,
(As thy own ghost were very near
Haunting thee amid thy folly!)
Skulking through the grass with fear,
As if thy heart were filled with hate
And paunch of food were desolate.

A TREASURE SHE

You stroll by the lapping river,
With sweetheart by your side;
Ah, your heart is all a quiver,
For pretty Byrl,
The laughing girl,
Has promised to be your bride.

And she'll keep the promise true;
Both heart and hand she gave,
To be kept and loved by you;
A treasure she
And you should be
Her master and her slave.

THE DREAM-DRIFTING WALTZ

In the waltz, sweet waltz! we move in a trance
Of enchanting delight,
Whirling, merrily dight,
'Neath the clear and bright
Gleam of the fairylike lamps overhead—
Gleam of the soft-shining lamps overhead!—
Aye, at every well
Of the orchestra's swell.
The charming strains impel
Us through the bewitching, dream-drifting waltz!

THE WALTZ

Trip lightly, Lila, lightly now,
See the the merry dancers gliding,
Whirling, airily as Fairies,
Sweetly to the airs confiding
All their thoughts in pleasant mazes,
Thrilled with pleasure, undeciding
On they go nor dream of sorrow,
Never brooding o'er, nor chiding,
Past displeasures—so, dearest, let us
Waltz now to the music's guiding.

SUCH IS LIFE

With eyes that melt and can be felt
Brown-eyed Sue she looks at you;
With eyes that beam with sunny gleam
Grey-eyed Mary's looks are true;
With eyes that snap at a lucky chap,
Black-eyed Minnie smiles with pride;
Sweet Katie's eyes are from the skies,
Blue and true—but she's Billy's bride!

GOOD WHEN COMBINED

A soft heart is a good thing when joined with a good sound head,
But otherwise it might as well be comatose or dead.

THE SPIRIT BRIDE*

Somebody comes in the gloom of night,
Through the listless haze and the dark,
Somebody comes like a fairy wight
Through the stygian shades—and hark:

On the winds a dream of music floats
Like seraphine far away strains,
And loving sighs are borne in the notes
Through the hallowed calm that reigns.

'Tis a song of angels floating down
From the realm of beauty and bliss,—
A song of the seas where sorrows drown,
Loosed from care by the joy-nymph's kiss,—

A song that tells me in whispered breath
That a form in that angel throng,
Mortally parted from me by death
Will be with me the whole night long.

*The above poem was inspired by a newspaper account of a young man who's bride was stricken with death the first day of their wedded life. The young man was for the time being mentally unbalanced by the sad event, and for some months afterward declared that he received visits from the spirit of his young wife, and was often, in the still hours of the night, heard speaking in language of endearment to the lovely shadow he fancied present.

O my heart is filled with love untold,
And with joy that others know not,
As my angel to my breast I hold
Every night in my humble cot.

Sweet spirit! she comes with a step as light
As the heaving of virtue's breast,
And her heart is warm and her eyes are bright
And she lulls me to calm, sweet rest.

She moves about in a cloud of balm,
And her face it is fond and fair;
To my soul she sings a gentle pslam
As sweet as the tenderest prayer.

In her fond caress I sleep and dream,
Aye, dream of the times long ago,
When naught in Heaven on high could seem
So benign as our lives below.

But morning comes with its craze and its care,
Its passion, its work and its strife,
All the ills that I alone must bear
Through the allotted time of life.

Then she wafts back to the glowing strand,
O'er the paradise-river wide,
To the Valleys of the Better Land—
She's the Angel of Light, my Bride!

MAN'S A FOOL

I maintain, as a rule
Man's a fool;
Always in a stew and fret—
When it's dry he wants it wet,
When it's wet he wants it dry,
Setting up a big ki-yi;
When it's cool he wants it hot,
When it's hot he wants it cool,
Always wanting what it is not!
I maintain, as a rule
Man's a fool.

FOUR CHARMS

A pretty face,
Good taste, a perfect form, a pure heart;—
Oh, would to grace
That these four charms were never found apart!

THE BLIZZARD

Boreas, that wild old wizard,
Has sent down another blizzard,
And the snow is on a tear
In the bosom of the air.

POESY'S GOLDEN AGE

Say not O soul that in this day, material, fast,
The Muse lies prostrate in the clay of ages past,
But gather inspiration from the pulsing throng
To sing with swelling, bounding heart, a sweeter
song.

The bards of old were better than their day,
Or whether mood was dark, or wild, or gay,
Or whether raptures of the patriot heart
Or sweetheart's yearning caused their lips to part
In song, they sang for future ages—yea—
For future fame they sang each roundelay;
But o'ermuch sang of lewdness, myth and war,
O'ermuch of what their readers now abhor.

The golden age of poesy is yet to come!
We stand within the dawn. Our poets are not dumb!
With parted lips and shining eyes e'en now they sing
Of glories that the future days are sure to bring.
Yea, more! They sing of home and native land,
And righteous principle, and strong demand
For manhood pure, and when they tune the lyre
To sing of romance and of heart's desire,
It is a song refined, appealing to
Uplifting sentiments, devotion true.

Here's health unto the poet of today!
Here to his strong, heart-building, tuneful lay!

SONG OF
THE ARABIAN PRINCE

What is it that waketh my soul
As from a calm sleep,
To tremble in ecstasy,
To dance in rapture,
To sing with gladness?
It is Zaada, my love!

Mine eyes melt in tenderness
As they dwell upon thy comeliness;
Flowers spontaneously grow
Where'er thy footfalls touch;
My heart drowns in smothering rapture
When I press thee to my heart,
O dream of glorious beauty!
Allah drench the grasses with perfumery
Where thou must walk, my love!
And carpet the dull earth
With dust of gold and sparkling jewels.

I am riding alone in the desert;—
O the parching thirst,
The hot, driving winds,
The scorched sands, the desolation!
A vast stretch of sterile plain!
How many hath here perished of famine,
Aye, miserably died of thirst.

O Allah, thou hast made
The children of men strong,
And given unto them good camels,
Beasts of burden that endure thirst,
Else the desert would be the grave
Of thousands and tens of thousands!

God is great!
This loneliness is sore to the heart,
Yet hath a grandeur
That leaveth its mark on the soul,
For in the absence of His great blessings
Our thoughts dwell on the Almighty.

I come to a fountain shaded with palms
In the midst of the desert.
O grateful oasis!
Here thousands thank Allah
For the cool water,
The soothing shade,
Blissful rest from the blistering sands.

As a fountain in the desert
Is my love among the maids of Islam.
O the air is blandly sweet,
Like nectar of enchanted herbs,
As my eyes dwell on my love.
The fair proportions of her angel form
Delight my soul
And make me revel deliciously
In dreams of beauty,

Heedful of naught but the presence
Of my love.
Her fingers are of the pure white
Described in crystal ices of the north,
But their touch is pleasant
As the breath of summer winds.
Her feet, devoid of shoe or sandal,
Placed within a wreath of roses white,
Would be in contrast just as fair
As lilies of the flowing Nile
Worn on Egyptian maiden's
Swarthy brow.

My journey 'cross the sunburned sands
Is short,
For my thoughts dwell on my love.
O she is a jewel of Araby!
Her eyes are like the stars
That light the night
From out the firmament.
Among the fairest she is the lily is,
The pearl.
Her voice is like
The low sweet chime of bells
That comes from far away
On the dewy airs of early morn.

I went up into the mountains to guard
The caravans. We met the Bedouins
And they fought us to despoil us
Of our riches.

We beat them off, but in my side
A robber's spear
Most savagely was thrust.
The blood gushed forth,
And my life,
Like a lamp faint from lack of oil,
Went nearly out,
Yea, I was upon the edge of life,
With small support,
But with her witching grace my love
Warmed me back to life with her warmth.
Nursed me with soothing medicines,
The balm of comfort and with angel care.
My wound she washed with oils,
With dove's flesh nourished me.
My fevered lips she cooled
With tonic-draughts of nectar.

O my love!
Thy witching touch thrilled me,
Thy warm breath
Filled me with new life.
Heaven bestow its riches on thy soul!
Thy brow shineth like the maiden moon,
Thy neck is like a skilled carving
Wonderful in animate ivory.

Join me, O my love, Zaada!
We will ever dwell together
In an atmosphere
Of rainbows and perfume.

Like a sunbeam
Dancing in the sparkling dew
Of early morning is my love,
Bright to behold, and fresh in beauty.
Thou art a dream of joy, Zaada,
Floating e'er through clouds of balm
That envelop me
With dreamy, rapt infatuations,
When thou art nigh.

I walk by the quiet sea
In the hush of the morning.
I look upon the blue waters,
The white foam, the shifting fog.
I see the deep gold of the rising sun
Flash out of the mighty east.
How beautiful is the rising sun!
Its glorious light
Spreads out over the bosom
Of the sea in a dream of dainty colors.
I dream of my love
As I stroll along the sands.
My love is rich in beauty,
In her heritage of comeliness;
The red rose blooms within her lips,
So rare and delicate yet so distinct a hue
As to outrival the fairest flower
Of the daybreak's choicest bloom.

O my love stands within the door
Of her silken tent!

A supple form she hath,
Perfect in every part, molded in health,
Fascinating to look upon.
O yea, I look, and my heart swoons
With utter ecstasy of love!
Her breast heaves,
Like the swell of gentle waves,
Like the movement of a quiet pool
When agitated by a spring beneath.
Bright houris fashioned her form
And placed a pleasing light
Within her eyes
Ere she was born;
Allah beamed a gracious smile
From out his throne
Upon her birth and blessed her,
And the influences of Heaven
Lent her special grace through childhood.
These happy chances left their reflex
In her perfect individuality.
She holdeth me in a trance of joy.
I greet my love!

Embrace me now, Zaada!
Thine arms possess supernal grace,
Thy breast a witching charm.
I press thee now to my heart!
O who hath ever in his speech
Described the intense joy of love?
Mine eyes rest on thy hand;
Such fingers could command
The homage of the universe.

Thy teeth are of the undiscovered pearls
Of ocean, richer white, and purer gems
Than the transparent ivory
That girts the comely ankle
Of the Peri queen.

O thy voice beguileth me to wander
Through the verdant valleys,
To look upon the lilies,
To listen to the tuneful harps
Of the daughters of music,
To breathe the odors of vineyards,
To watch the sun break from the clouds
And shine upon the hills!
My love, thou art the essence of my soul.

THE WOLF

Full meanly doest thou snarl and snap,
  And show thy teeth, thou varmint gaunt;
Ah, wouldst thou like to eat a chap
  Like me? Away, mad cur, avaunt!
But wait! I have some buckshot here,
  And three will chamber in my gun!
I'll quickly load! But, ah—oh dear!
  Thou seem'st to think it time to run.

THE SCHOOL BULLY

John is the bully of our school,
  His fist is like a rock;
But mentally John he's a fool,—
  To prove it, hear him talk.

He is a coward of the worst,
  At ghosts he takes affright;
To prove it, ask him if he durst
  To meet you late at night—

To meet you down in Dead Man's Run
  When wolves and spooks are out,
Just for to have a little fun
  And chase the ghosts about.

But he delights to slam and cuff
  And knock the kids around,
And brag and bluster in a rough
  And scary sort of sound.

Yes, John's the bully of our school,
  O'er boys not quite his size;
To fight big boys is not his rule,—
  He hates to have "black eyes."

Our books and work aside we fling,
Wild geese and ducks are on the wing.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Joe, he will have to mind, this term,
The teacher has red hair,
And if her stick dont make him squirm
She'll whale him with her chair.

Her scowl is fierce, she cannot smile,
She's sour as a pickle;
She's slouchy, too, she's out of style,
And "hamely, too, ower mickle".

And did you ever see such eyes?
They're sharp as railroad spikes;
She tries to look most wondrous wise—
Did you ever see the likes?

She's got two ferules on her desk,
A great big strap inside;
She won't find it much of a task
To tan poor Joey's hide.

Yes, Joe will sure get his deserts,
She'll trim him every day;
He'll beller loudly when it hurts,
And then we'll all feel gay.

I'd like to smash the villain's snoot,
The wretch that conjured up cube root.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Angels they have golden hair,
But angels are not half so fair
As teacher;
We hated her at first, but now
We love her dearly, I allow,
And when we try to say good-bye,
All but the big boys have to cry.
We bought a ring to give to her
And picked out Joe to make a talk,
But Joe broke down, choked up, as 'twere
Blushed red, then turned as pale as chalk
And only said (we scarce could hear)
"Here's sump'n fer ye, teacher dear."

Her hair is golden, is not red,
I like her eyes, I've always said;
She's good and true and awful kind
And don't thrash one to make him mind.
We'll miss her, yes, like everything—
I'm glad I helped to buy the ring
For teacher.

YOUTHFUL ASSURANCE

Wilt thou be mine, radiant girl? O tell!
Thus I beseech, exhort and pray—well, well,—
I know thou art mine,
For the dream of a soul-delighting smile
Lingers in the rose of thy lips the while.

THE BOY TRAPPER

Early, ere the break of day,
The muskrat trapper hies away,
To see his traps and get the game
Before the crows eat up the same.

Most every lad has felt the call
To hunt and trap in early fall;
Somehow this pastime sure appeals
To a wildness in him that he feels.

And sleepy in the mornings he
All other times is sure to be,
But when his traps are out and set,
He's early up and out, you bet!

THE HOME TEAM WINS 4-TO-0

Play ball! That's the call that makes a lad's blood
tingle,
Jack to bat! How's that! as with the fans we
mingle?
Home team! They're the cream! How they trim
the visitors!
Four-to-nought! That's what! Tell it to inquisitors.

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